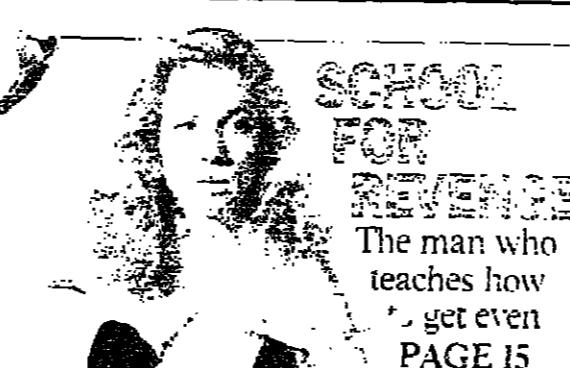


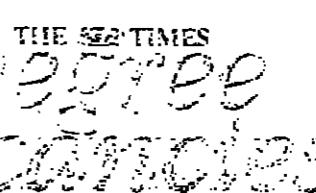
SHORT SHARP ADVICE
British radio awaits America's cult agony aunt
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SCHOOL FOR REVENGE
The man who teaches how to get even
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AFTER A LEVELS:

Daily up-to-date listings:



PAGE SPECIAL

We will be on target, says minister

Inflation hits highest level for two years

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN'S determination to keep a tight grip on the economy was dealt a severe blow yesterday as inflation rose to 3.3 per cent, the highest level for nearly two years.

A high street spending spree, higher mortgage costs and a rise in petrol prices contributed to the sharp increase in the headline rate from 2.9 per cent, bursting through the Chancellor's target for the second month running.

The underlying rate, the Government's preferred measure which excludes mortgage interest payments, also rose above City forecasts, up from 2.7 per cent to 3 per cent.

The figures immediately raised speculation that the Bank of England might again come under pressure to raise interest rates, although ministers argued that they did not think this would be necessary. The bank is due to publish its quarterly inflation report to

day in the wake of four interest rate rises since the general election.

Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, played down the figures, insisting that inflation would return to its target figure of 2.5 per cent within two months and without the need for a further interest rate rise.

The Bank's statement on August 7 said the perception is that interest rates have reached a level consistent with the inflation target, he said. "I hope very much that will be their view tomorrow."

But the Tories seized on the figures, claiming that they were the direct result of Mr Brown's "boasted Budget."

Michael Fallon, the industry spokesman, said: "Labour's decision to jack up taxes - starting with a higher-than-expected rise in petrol duty - has fed straight through into higher prices."

No wonder the Bank of England raised interest rates

again last week. They knew that Gordon Brown's budget had injected extra inflationary pressure into the system."

Economic analysts said the rise should not have a big influence on interest rates, after the Bank's statement last week that the current levels were consistent with the inflation target.

The City also tried to play down the hike because most of the changes were due to seasonal food prices and the petrol price which rose by about 2.5p a litre in July in response to the increase in duty announced by Mr Brown.

But the inflation figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) were combined with separate data showing that high street sales were growing at their fastest rate for nine months. The value of retail sales jumped from 4.5 per cent in June to 5.2 per cent last month.

The ONS figures showed that motoring costs have risen by 1 per cent in a month compared with a 0.1 per cent rise last July, feeding through to a 6.4 per cent annual rise.

A 4.1 per cent rise in the mortgage interest element of the data, on the back of lending rate increases after the base rate hikes, helped drive up housing inflation by 1.1 per cent in the month, compared with 0.4 per cent last July.

Seasonal food prices, which fell 0.1 per cent in July 1996, only fell 2.9 per cent last month, feeding through to a 0.6 per cent rise over the year. Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, said: "Today's inflation news is very disappointing, especially as the big rise in the pound should have been helping to keep prices down."

Andrew Cates, an economist with Swiss Bank UBS, said the market would probably take some comfort from a fall in service inflation to 2.9 per cent from 3.2 per cent, as the service sector has been the motor of the current boom.

The location was suitably distant from the last official photo-call in August 1981. The

Labour's Scottish crisis deepens

BY DOMINIC KENNEDY AND ANDREW PILICE

THE Labour Party's problems over sleaze deepened last night after backbenchers demanded a widening of the investigation into the suicide of Gordon McMaster after two dramatic new twists.

The police have handed a report to the Procurator Fiscal, after a two-year investigation, into IFC Security, a Paisley-based company. The company, which had a contract with the local Labour council and two Labour councillors on its board, was accused by McMaster of being involved in laundering drug money.

The body of McMaster was found in his semi-detached car port weeks ago. He had reportedly been ill and was receiving police protection after a tip-off against the

security company and its alleged links with Labour councillors.

In a new development a jury cleared a man yesterday of shooting a gangster in Paisley last year after the defence claimed that the real killers included Billy Gillespie, a leading figure in FCB Security.

McMaster, 37, left a suicide note which blamed senior party colleagues for conducting a whispering campaign alleging he was a homosexual suffering from HIV.

Support was rapidly ebbing away last night for Tommy Graham, the Labour MP named in the suicide note, who is facing possible disciplinary action after an outburst in a Glasgow newspaper in which he described the late McMaster as a "drunkard" who was "ill with the booze".

Petrol tax, page 25

Cricket anger

Angry scenes in which players pushed each other and exchanged heated words marred the end of cricket's NatWest Trophy semi-final last night..... Page 44

Gulf campaigner dies at 30

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

ONE of the leading campaigners for government action on Gulf War syndrome died yesterday after years of sickness. The death of Paul Carr prompted calls from fellow veterans of the war for the Government to speed its promised action to tackle the mysterious illness.

Mr Carr, 40, served with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers during Operation Desert Storm as an anti-tank vehicle driver investigating the remains of bombed Iraqi tanks. Even as he grew increasingly ill with a brain tumour, he had joint and liver problems, his greatest concern was for his two daughters.

They were both born with rare and dangerous heart disorders and he was convinced that he had passed to them something he had picked up in the desert.

Mr Carr, from Manchester, was a leading and outspoken member of the National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association. He was moved to St Anne's Hospice for the terminally ill in Manchester two weeks ago and fell into a coma over the weekend.

He added: "When Tanya was born with this defect I was sad, of course, but I did not make any connection with the Gulf. But when Adele had the

Continued on page 2, col 4

Mr Hopfmuller had been piloting his Catana DV 20 aircraft from Leeds to Rufforth Airfield on the outskirts of York. As he approached the landing strip he collided with a Twin Squirrel helicopter on a flight from Pocklington, in East Yorkshire, to Teesside. He said: "It was more than just a miracle escape. I was saved by my cloth cap. I was given clearance to land by York and started my descent. Suddenly I saw the helicopter above me to the right and two seconds later it hit me with a terrific strike."

"The rotor blade cracked me on the perspex shield attached to my cloth cap which I always wear to fly in. The cap was knocked clean off. If I hadn't been wearing it I fear my head would have been cut clean off. I was saved."

Although his right hand was bleeding he kept control of the glider and landed in a field. The helicopter pilot, Philip Amadeus, and his co-pilot, Paul Moran, crashed in a cornfield near by.

□ Pilot killed: The pilot of a microlight aircraft was killed as he took off from Netherthorpe Aerodrome near Worksop.

He was a member of Sheffield Aero Club.

Jumbo stowaway wins second chance

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

AN INDIAN stowaway who was refused asylum after surviving -40C temperatures hidden inside the undercarriage of a jumbo jet was last night told his case would be reviewed.

Within hours of the refusal, Mike O'Brien, a Home Office Minister, said he would consider the "compassionate circumstances" of Hardeep Singh, who was found staggering about Heathrow Airport on October 12 last year.

Doctors described Mr Singh, 23, as a "medical miracle" and believe he survived by going

into a state of suspended animation during the ten-hour flight, during which his brother Vijay, 19, died after falling from the British Airways 747 when the undercarriage was lowered over Nubraford, Surrey.

Mr Singh applied for asylum, claiming he had suffered persecution by Indian police who accused him of links with Sikh terrorists in his native Punjab. His lawyers told an immigration appeal hearing in June that he had been arrested twice and beaten. However, his family learned yesterday that his application had been rejected.

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Cap's away for pilot hit by helicopter

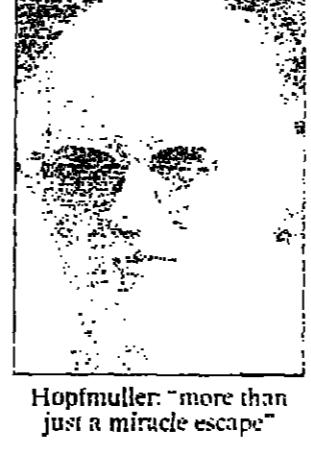
By PAUL WILKINSON

THE pilot of a motorised glider had the cap knocked from his head by a helicopter rotor blade as they collided in mid-air yesterday.

Martin Hopfmuller, a retired Austrian music professor, escaped with a cut hand as he and the two-man helicopter crew made emergency landings after the accident in North Yorkshire. Later Mr Hopfmuller, 65, declined a lift to hospital in an RAF rescue helicopter, claiming he preferred the safety of an ambulance.

Mr Hopfmuller had been piloting his Catana DV 20 aircraft from Leeds to Rufforth Airfield on the outskirts of York. As he approached the landing strip he collided with a Twin Squirrel helicopter on a flight from Pocklington, in East Yorkshire, to Teesside. He said: "It was more than just a miracle escape. I was saved by my cloth cap. I was given clearance to land by York and started my descent. Suddenly I saw the helicopter above me to the right and two seconds later it hit me with a terrific strike."

"The rotor blade cracked me on the perspex shield attached to my cloth cap which I always wear to fly in. The cap was knocked clean off. If I hadn't been wearing it I fear my head would have been cut clean off. I was saved."



Hopfmuller: "more than just a miracle escape"

Lawyers attack police bugging code

A DRAFT code of conduct allowing police to break in to homes or offices and bug suspects was published by the Home Office yesterday. It was immediately attacked by lawyers as a licence to spy on confidential meetings.

Earlier this year the Conservative Government passed the Police Act 1997, which legalised the use of police bugs and vehicle tracking devices to collect intelligence on those suspected of involvement in serious crimes.

Under the draft code, intrusive surveillance operations must be

authorised by a chief constable or his deputy and reported to a group of commissioners who will be current or former high court judges. Police will require agreement from a commissioner if they want to bug a home, hotel bedroom or office. They will also need agreement if the operation would involve access to confidential legal, journalistic or personal material, including medical and spiritual counselling. The code includes an

undertaking from the police and Customs that they will not bug the confessional.

If the investigation is urgent police can go ahead, but must report and justify their action to a commissioner as soon as possible. This commissioner can order the police to abandon an operation.

Alun Michael, the Home Office Minister responsible for the police, said he expected that up to seven commissioners would be appointed, including a chief commissioner.

He would act as arbiter between police and commissioners and present a report to Parliament each year.

Last year chief constables and Customs officers carried out 2,550 secret operations involving bugs and tracking devices under ad hoc Home Office arrangements.

Mr Michael said: "The public needs to be protected from the nasty and dangerous people in

involved in high-level crime. But it is essential that police and Customs' powers are subject to effective safeguards and independent scrutiny. We must ensure people's liberties are protected."

But the Law Society announced it would fight for changes in the code.

Roger Ede, the secretary of the society's criminal law committee, said it had been hoped the code would clear up deficiencies in the Act but it had not. The police could

bug lawyer's offices without showing any reasonable suspicion that the conversations involved criminal matters. Police were being given carte blanche to break the lawyer's privileged position. There was no mention of any disciplinary action against police who breached the Act.

The Liberal Democrats also maintained that the safeguards do not go far enough. Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank, the party's home

affairs spokesman, said that bugging should be used as a last resort and where judicial authorisation had already been given.

Last night the Home Office said that a failure by a chief constable to comply with the criteria set out in the code was not a disciplinary matter. A commissioner would halt the intercept. Unauthorised bugging by junior officers would be subject to normal discipline.

Comments on the code must be received by the Home Office by September 30. The final draft must be approved by Parliament.

Railway cameras put more crooks in the frame

By LIN JENKINS

SURVEILLANCE around London's rail network completes a major refit this month, greatly improving the images recorded by cameras, and making it easier to identify criminals from freeze-frames, even when lighting conditions are poor.

The network is the largest in Europe, with 1,500 cameras covering stations, approach roads, parking areas, platforms, ticket offices and shopping areas. New software enables images to be enhanced to sharpen the details.

The system had its inception in 1991 in response to the IRA bombing campaign in London, and was completed four years later. Sergeant David Cooper of the British Transport Police video unit said that new equipment would also allow officers to gather relevant recordings from a number of locations on one tape, without endless copying and editing.

"Within an hour of an incident being reported, we will have identified all the relevant tapes and be ready to start work," he said. "The system is designed so that if any point of the network should be damaged, this would not result in a loss of images to us. It would be extremely difficult to knock out the system."

Footage from the system has played a key role in the convictions of a number of criminals. Two brothers jailed for ten years at the Old Bailey last month for a "steaming" incident on a train to Deptford had been tracked through the system.

The London Underground also has a comprehensive camera system. A spokesman for British Transport police said: "We do not stand still. The system is under constant review and we update it whenever technology provides something to enhance our surveillance."



The three Princes face the media on a pebbled beach by the Dee. A further Balmoral photo-call has been promised

Balmoral photo-call for Princes

Continued from page 1
the country by media intrusion.

Officials said that the event had been arranged last Thursday, before the pictures of Dodi and Diana appeared. "It is something we have been looking at for some time, to see how we could work with the press to meet their needs and allow the children to have a private holiday with their father. It is an experiment. If this does not work, it will never happen again," Ms Henney said.

It appeared, however, to work. By the time the Princes emerged from the woods just after 10am, accompanied by Prince William's black labrador, Wigeon, and his father's Jack Russell, Tigger, the morning mist had lifted to be replaced by weak summer sunshine.

Wigeon was the first to appear, unselfconsciously sniffing among the pebbles. But as soon as she noticed the assembled media, she did an about-turn. There was no such retreat for the Prince of Wales in his kilt of Balmoral tartan as he strode out of the wood and on to the beach with a shepherd's crook, followed by his two sons.

At first both William and Harry, both in casual trousers and shirtsleeves, seemed disconcertingly fascinated by their feet as they gingerly picked their way over the pebbles and rocks to the



The royal newlyweds in 1981 — 15 miles upstream

shoreline. The small party exchanged only a few words and walked apart during the five-minute session. Harry skimmed a pebble over the water and occasionally ven-

tured a smile at the cameras. But William, taking after his mother in her early days of fame, studiously ignored all pleas to look up. Instead he threw stones into the water for Wigeon, while his father leaned on his crook attempting to look as though he was out for a normal stroll.

Wigeon was the one who finally broke the ice. All three Princes broke out in smiles as she splashed like a puppy at the shoreline vainly searching for a pebble thrown by her master. The trio then stood rather stiffly in a line, smiling, before turning back to the wood and, they hoped, their private holiday. It was only then that William finally responded to a photographer's plea and glanced up through his eyelashes with a shy smile — the very image of his mother.

Afterwards the Prince's press secretary looked pleased. No one had shouted questions about Dodi, or about Camilla. The ladies and gentlemen of the press had behaved. But it may not last. Ian Lundy of the local North Scot press agency said yesterday: "If a story breaks about Diana or Camilla, there is no way we can ignore the fact that Charles is at Balmoral."

Mr Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes cleared a 200-metre landing strip on ice that was in constant danger of breaking up, so that a plane could land to rescue Alan Bywaters, who was suffering from hypothermia and frostbite.

Mr Hempleman-Adams, a veteran of 29 major expeditions which have resulted in

two friends losing their lives, wrote in his report to the society about the incident in March: "I have been in some major scrapes. However, I would count this rescue as the most hazardous or risky to my life that I have encountered."

The society's citation says

Mr Bywaters had fallen through ice and had lost his survival equipment, radio, food, stove and fuel. He managed to get out of the sea and followed the tracks of the Hempleman-Adams team,

who were trying to reach the North Pole without support, until he reached them.

After giving first aid Mr

Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes erected radio antennae to call for assistance. Then

they cleared and marked a landing strip, guided the plane in and manhandled Mr Bywaters aboard in a sledge.

Because of the strain the incident put on them and their equipment and food supplies,

Mr Hempleman-Adams and Mr Gjeldnes then had to abandon their own expedition.

Legion attacks Labour for war pensions volte-face

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

LABOUR was accused by the Royal British Legion yesterday of breaking a pre-election pledge to war pensioners. The legion said the party had promised that a Labour Government would review the system that allows local authorities to "penalise" veterans because of their war pension income.

Councils are legally obliged to disregard war pension income of at least £10 a week — but they can choose to ignore the entire amount — when assessing entitlement to housing

Gulf campaigner dies at 30

Continued from page 1
same condition I began to think that there was something going on."

Both daughters underwent operations, but will develop breathing problems in later life. As there was no history of heart problems in the family, doctors said it was extremely unusual for both girls to be born with the same problem.

Tom Flint, the association's regional organiser, said fellow ex-servicemen were devastated by Mr Carr's death. "Paul's death underlines the need for very urgent action. We are dying off at the rate of two a month. This Government is giving us more talk than the previous one, but still there is no action." The association be-

last month that it wanted a "new beginning" on the subject and promised £6.5 million to fund research.

Hilary Meredith, a Manchester-based solicitor acting for veterans, said that Mr Carr's death had hit his colleagues hard. "He was a very big voice in the association and spoke extensively to raise the public image of the case," she said.

"He is the twenty-seventh client to die since we started acting on this case and it has to stop now. The Government has to take this extremely seriously. Never mind all the investigations: just find some treatment fast before any more of our clients go the same way."

lives that there have been more than 100 deaths from Gulf War illness and thousands have suffered symptoms. The Government said

it was giving us more talk than the previous one, but still there is no action." The association be-



Rare bird is mass killer

A population of one of the world's rarest seabirds, the great skua, killed and ate about 200,000 other seabirds, including kittiwakes, puffins, fulmars and Arctic terns, on the Shetland Islands last year, according to a study for Scottish Natural Heritage. The skua's diet changed during a temporary shortage of sand eels, and they might now be

advised to protect the other birds.

Constable country threat

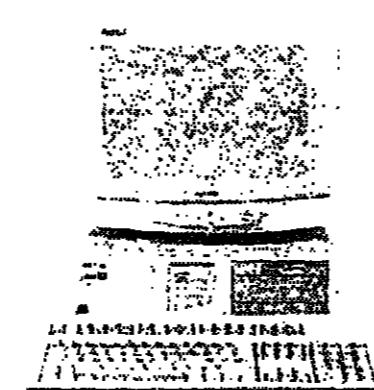
Foreign tourists are threatening to destroy the landscape immortalised by Constable in *The Haywain* — Dedham Vale on the Essex-Suffolk border. In a special assessment of the area, the Countryside Commission warns of the damage mass tourism can do. Local people blame the British Tourist Authority's policy of enticing visitors away from London and extended ferry services to Harwich.

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Nun's kiss ruined Singing Vicar's charity fraud

By PAUL WILKINSON

A BOGUS bishop who billed himself as The Singing Vicar and tricked the public out of at least £250,000 in charity donations was exposed when he was seen kissing one of his collectors.

Liverpool Crown Court was told that David Valentine appeared on stage in pubs along with "singing nuns". He employed designers and printers to create false authorisation badges, produced bogus labels for collecting tins, created sashes for female collectors to wear and regularly emptied full tins into a holdall and replaced the seals. The money, intended for genuine charities, was never seen again.

Valentine, 38, told the jury that his act was "a bit like you may have seen in the film *Sister Act* with Whoopi Goldberg. I wear a white robe and a bishop's hat and everyone in the audience sings along."

The court was told that the charities involved included Leukaemia Research, the Royal School for the Blind, Clatterbridge Hospital Cancer Research Trust, the Salvation Army and the Royal Liverpool Hospital Foyer Me Not Cancer Appeal. Valentine also made money over a number of years from pub and street collections, jumble sales and charity shops.

Valentine, who posed as an ordained minister of various churches, had initially made a living singing in pubs and running a removals business. In the 1980s he became a street collector for the Salvation Army but was banned after complaints.

However, he still made col-



Valentine: he compared his show to *Sister Act*

were seen kissing, then rang the police.

Valentine, from Upton, Cheshire, who was jailed for four years, had denied three charges of conspiring to obtain donations by deception. But Judge John Morgan told him he had been convicted on overwhelming evidence. The judge said: "This was a long-term, well-organised, deliberate course of dishonesty. You used your former connections with a Toxteth church and with the Salvation Army to dress as a clergyman, adding credibility to your collections and your collectors. But you were not a genuine man of God collecting for good causes. You were a charlatan and a fraud."

He said that perhaps the worst aspect of Valentine's behaviour was the effect it would undoubtedly have on the willingness of the public to give to genuine collectors. "Not surprisingly they fear that their money may not be going to its proper destination and so are reluctant to give at all. Your conduct has made the task of genuine collectors that much more difficult and the scepticism of the public to grow when presented with a collecting box."

Ian Wilkinson, 40, of Wallsey, who was convicted of conspiring with Valentine and admitted a similar offence committed after Valentine's arrest in February 1995, was jailed for 15 months. Similar charges against Terence Bryant, 59, of Birkenhead, on which a jury could not decide, and Diane Mitchell, 41, of Birkenhead, were laid on the file. They had denied the charges.



Jill Wilson with her four-month-old baby Anthony: she was killed as she pushed his pram

Victims' family criticises driver, 86

By LIN JENKINS

A WOMAN of 86 who died at the wheel of her car, which went out of control and killed a young mother and critically injured a four-month-old baby, should never have been driving, the victim's family said yesterday.

David Wilson, whose sister-in-law Jill was killed as she pushed her baby's pram in Fleet, Hampshire, said: "It's terrible the motorist died, but what on earth was she doing behind the wheel at her age?"

Governments should introduce regular check-ups for drivers as soon as they reach a certain age and, if they don't come up to scratch, then their licences should be taken away."

Mrs Wilson's baby, Anthony, underwent brain surgery after Monday's accident. Yesterday he was in a stable condition in intensive care at the regional paediatric neurological centre at King's College Hospital. His father Ian Wilson was visiting him. The couple's two-year-old daughter Victoria saw her mother

die. Mrs Wilson, 34, was a driving instructor.

The car was driven by Winifred Fletcher, whose son Michael said: "On behalf of my mother's family, I would like to say that we are all deeply shocked. Our thoughts are with the victims."

Police said they would look at Mr Fletcher's medical history. At 70, motorists must be passed fit to drive by their doctor.

Medical briefing, page 7

Dating agency says widow was Mrs Wrong

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A WIDOW who claims that she left a dating agency because it matched her with a string of unsuitable men was dropped by the agency because she pestered one of her suitors, a court was told yesterday.

Susan Constable, 39, is seeking a refund of her £376 membership fee from Initial Approach, which she left after complaining that she was introduced to fat men, bald men and men who could not drive.

Yesterday Stirling Sheriff Court was told that Mrs Constable's membership had been terminated because of complaints from one of the partners found for her.

Mrs Constable, who has since found a boyfriend without the help of a dating agency, launched a small claims action for a refund from Susan Menoni, head of the agency. She said at an earlier hearing that Initial Approach had sent her details of 14 men who were nearly all unsuitable. Having requested a local non-smoker who could take her for drives in the country, she said that she was offered a man who was too scared to drive, another who could hardly see, one who lived 200 miles away and several unrepentant smokers.

Tom Murray, for Initial Approach, told Sheriff Robert Younger yesterday: "Mrs Constable is saying her membership was cancelled when she made a complaint. Mrs Menoni is saying her membership was cancelled because her behaviour was in breach of the company's code of conduct."

He said that letters written by Mrs Constable to another client that she was dating had been in breach of the code of conduct. Sheriff Younger ruled that a full hearing would begin on September 29. Out-



Menoni: refused refund of membership fee

War crime defendant dies in hospital

By ADRIAN LEE

THE Surrey pensioner who became the first man to appear in a British court accused of Nazi war crimes has died in hospital of old age, his solicitor said yesterday.

Szymon Serafinowicz, 86, was accused of playing a leading role in the murders of 3,000 Jews on the Eastern front in the 1940s, and faced three specimen charges of murder. An Old Bailey jury decided in January that Mr Serafinowicz, of Banstead, Surrey, was mentally unfit to face murder charges, and the case against him collapsed.

The abandoned trial was estimated to have cost £4 million. Mr Serafinowicz, a retired carpenter, was suffering from Alzheimer's disease and had been in hospital for the past two months with heart problems and cancer. Ted Dancy, his solicitor, said: "He went to his grave sad that he didn't have the chance to prove his innocence, which he maintained until his last breath." He died last Thursday.

Mr Dancy said: "Since the court case he had lived a quiet existence at home. When I last saw him he was clearly not a well man — he was rambling — but he still felt angry at the way he had been treated. But he was a very strong man."

The jury's decision in the case cast doubt over future war crimes prosecutions in British courts. Opponents of the War Crimes Act — under which the prosecutions are brought — seized on the jury's decision as a persuasive argument that pursuing alleged war criminals from the Second World War era was a costly and futile exercise.

The Crown Prosecution Service said yesterday that the cases of four other alleged war criminals living in England and Wales were still being considered for prosecution.



Odd, but true. Mars bars were the only chocolate

bars sent out to British troops in World

War Two. Top tactics from our man Churchill

A PERSIAN cat taken to the vet for a routine shave for matted fur got a more extensive cut than it expected.

The eight-month kitten, called Courtney, whose lilac fur meant its offspring could command prices of up to £200, was to be used for breeding by its owners, Leona Flynn-Hudson and her husband, Craig, of Wardley, Tyne and Wear.

When Mr Flynn-Hudson collected the kitten from the White Linn Veterinary Clinic, he was shocked to find that it

had been spayed. Mrs Flynn-Hudson said yesterday that she thought the vet could have misread "clip and shave" in the surgery diary for "clip and spay". Now she plans to sue the clinic.

"My husband was told she would have to be given tablets each day because of the operation. He said there must have been a mistake and asked if he had been handed the right cat. That is when the vet realised what had happened."

"When I found out I was

Britons forced out of top hotel

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 200 British holidaymakers were evacuated from a leading all-inclusive Jamaican beach resort yesterday after striking hotel workers forced its closure.

The five-star Renaissance Jamaica Grande, near Ocho Rios, is being picketed by hotel workers fighting for union recognition. Within 24 hours the hotel ran out of food and drink and had to call in fleets of buses to take nearly 1,500 guests to other hotels.

The British holidaymakers were all clients of Airtours and had paid £1,550 each for the two-week holiday. Airtours representatives in Jamaica have found alternative accommodation in more expensive properties, but some guests have been forced to stay in smaller hotels.

"We had no warning of the strike at all until the staff walked out on Sunday," an Airtours spokesman said.

The strike started after the hotel, owned largely by Marriot Hotels, refused to allow the staff a poll to elect union representatives. They were ordered by the Jamaica Supreme Court to recognise the union but apparently ignored it.

Vince Morrison, the union's local supervisor, said: "Workers are fed up with the working conditions and are prepared to go all the way, regardless of the consequences."

having kittens I was so mad. I couldn't believe the cat could have gone in for a shave and come out spayed. She looked so down when she came home. Craig and I were both very sad."

The couple have been offered £450 by the Veterinary Defence Society, an insurer which is handling the case, but their solicitor has turned down the offer. The society and the clinic, in South Hetton, Tyne and Wear, both declined to comment yesterday.

Mars

1932 Sixty-five years of Mars 1997

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Grammar tests too tough for teachers

By DAVID CHARTER

COMPULSORY English grammar tests for 14-year-olds have been cancelled next year after teachers said they did not know how to teach sentence construction.

This summer's trial of the 50-minute exam, planned for all schools next year, was taken up by only a quarter of secondaries. Protests from many English teachers about the difficulty of teaching subordinate clauses and adverbial phrases has convinced the Government to excuse most schools, although 100 will be chosen to try out a modified paper.

A spokeswoman for the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority said yesterday: "We are extending the pilot tests for another year in grammar, spelling and punctuation, to fine-tune them based on feedback from teachers."

Top professions prefer 'Ivy League' graduates

Students told to study universities' job prospects, reports David Charter

AN IVY League of traditional universities is favoured by high-earning professions seeking to recruit the brightest graduates, according to a survey of employers. Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol Universities provide most recruits for firms of solicitors, barristers, merchant bankers, accountants and actuaries.

The findings come as it emerged that none of the top three universities have places left for October in clearing, the annual scramble by candidates who miss their target grades for vacant courses, which begins tomorrow once the A-level results come out.

There will be some places available at the next most successful universities identified by professional companies: Durham, Manchester, King's College London, Birmingham and Nottingham.

The survey, by the MPW group of independent sixth-form colleges, is a warning to thousands of students expected to join clearing to escape the Government's introduction of annual £1,000 university course fees next year.

Joe Ruston, of MPW, said:

"There are signals this year that you should try to save the cost of course fees by going to any university, but if it does not confer much in the way of job prospects, it is going to look like a false saving in the long run. I do not think the hysterical comments about rushing into university this year are very sophisticated. We are talking about people's income over a long period."

Research into universities' graduations employment prospects will pay dividends, he said.

Several former polytechnics made their mark in the survey, led by the University of the West of England, at 39th with 12 graduates at the top firms. London Guildhall, Oxford Brookes and Anglia Polytechnic University shared 47th place ahead of some traditional universities with eight recruits apiece.

The findings confirm the conclusion of *Great Expectations*, an analysis of the experiences and expectations of

graduates recruited in the past three years by leading firms of solicitors, barristers, merchant bankers, accountants and actuaries

more than 5,000 final year students at 21 institutions published earlier this year. It found that the growing number of graduates seemed to be convincing employers to concentrate on a narrower, not wider, range of institutions.

Many school-leavers are ignorant of the financial demands that will be made on them at university, a NatWest Bank survey showed yesterday. They are also becoming increasingly tolerant about the prospect of being in debt, with half of those surveyed agreeing that debt is just part of student lifestyle.

The survey of pupils from 50 secondary schools showed that 61 per cent of sixth formers believed they would not have to borrow money at university, although at least 74 per cent of undergraduates are in debt.

Daily listings of degree course vacancies start in The Times tomorrow with a comprehensive 16-page guide to clearing.

WHERE FIRMS FIND TALENT

Graduates recruited in the past three years by leading firms of solicitors, barristers, merchant bankers, accountants and actuaries

Oxford	78	Warwick	48
Cambridge	75	Leeds	46
Bristol	55	Southampton	46
Durham	54	Edinburgh	42
Manchester	54	Sheffield	40
King's College	53	UCL	38
Birmingham	50	Cardiff	33
Nottingham	50	York	32
Exeter	49	City	30
LSE	49	Newcastle	30



Kevin Art and his girlfriend Erin Riley after the extradition hearing yesterday

America sends back Maze trio

A JUDGE in San Francisco yesterday ruled that three men who had escaped from a prison in Northern Ireland would not be punished for their political views if returned to British custody and ordered them to be extradited to Britain. Kevin Art, Pol

Brennan and Terence Kirby, all alleged members of the IRA who escaped from Northern Ireland's Maze prison in 1983, were arrested in California between 1992 and 1994. Art and Kirby were convicted of murder, and Brennan on explosives charges. In his writ-

ten ruling, District Judge Charles Legge said: "Respondents were convicted because they committed serious crimes, not because they are Catholics or Nationalists. A killing is still a crime, regardless of the banner under which the criminal stands."

Trinity students lobby for return of Home Rule

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

AS SINN FEIN prepares for political battle in pursuit of its goal of a united Ireland, a group of Roman Catholic students in the Irish Republic are struggling for reunification with Britain and a return to Home Rule.

During freshers' week the Independent Unionist Association at Trinity College Dublin will erect a stand calling on people to join their cause.

David Christopher, 19, a history student, has founded the movement of Irish people — most of them Catholic — who

would prefer to be British. "I

do not subscribe to the concept

that Irishness and Britishness

are mutually exclusive," he

said. "I would think that they

are mutually inclusive as we

share the same language,

history and culture. We are a

national political unit."

The association, which has

ten members, wants an end to

what it sees as the failed Irish

State, born in 1922 out of a

nationalist struggle to force

Britain from Ireland. Mr

Christopher, who comes from a

non-Unionist background in

Galway, refers to Britain as

the "mainland" — a term that

is anathema to most Irish

Catholics. He said that he had

more in common with Britain

as he watched English tele-

vision and read English

newspapers and was proud to be

called a "West Brit".

While reunification with

Britain is a long-term goal, his

organisation wants Ireland to

return to the Commonwealth,

British passports for any Irish

citizens who want them and

the deletion of Articles 2 and 3

of the Irish Constitution laying

claim to Northern Ireland.

The Irish national anthem

should also be scrapped

because it is, the association

claims, offensive to most Irish

people."

The association has been

growing for the past year

under the guidance of Derek

Simpson, 40, a Protestant

micro-electronics researcher

at the university. "Breaking

the link with Britain was a

mistake," he said. "Republicanism and nationalism has

done more to divide people than

any bombing campaign and I

would also fault the

Catholic Church and the

Christian brothers for all the

untruths that they have

pumped out over the years

about Unionism."

The association has made

contact with David Trimble's

Ulster Unionist Party, Ian

Paisley's Democratic Unionist

Party, the Orange Order and

the Apprentice Boys.

Masked saboteurs attack American grouse shooters

By ROBIN YOUNG AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

SABOTEURS yesterday at

attacked a party of Ameri-

cans on the opening day of

the grouse-shooting season.

The saboteurs were said

to have confronted the

group after a day's shooting

at Gilmonby Moor, two

miles south of Bowes, in Co

Durham. Some of the gang,

armed with sticks and

wearing balaclavas and

ski masks, attacked the guns

and left at least six people

needing first aid. Up to 70

police officers were sent to

the moor.

The British Field Sports

Society said last night: "A

party of elderly American

gentlemen were

injured, though mercifully

none of them seriously.

Once again, it is a case of

serious and wanton vi-

olence from the saboteurs.

"One of the gentlemen in

the shooting party received

a black eye while others

were distressed and shak-

ing. They came to enjoy a

week's shooting in very

beautiful part of England

and end up being attacked

like this. It was an appall-

ing incident."

Durham police said: "Of-

ficers on the moor say no

shooting was taking place

when the two sides clashed.

Police are also investigat-

ing claims that cameras

and camera bags were sto-

len during the flare-up."

The first day of the sea-

son in England got off to a

slow start, with many

sportsmen electing to wait a

week or two before reaching

for their guns. In Scotland,

there was more

activity, with many small

family shoots getting under

way, although cold and wet

weather in May and June

had affected the incubation

of many young birds in

southern Scotland.

Be here now, but come back next week

Carol Midgley reports on the hype surrounding Oasis's latest album

OASIS fans, desperate to hear the band's long-awaited new album, were last night caught up in one of the most sophisticated marketing operations of the decade.

Frenzied teenagers crowded into Virgin megastores across the country, where exclusive preview copies of *Be Here Now* were piped across interstate radios.

However, the fans were not allowed to buy the album. That would have disrupted the carefully controlled publicity operation that has dominated its release since last month. Instead they were asked to return a week tomorrow when it goes on sale.

Hype surrounding *Be Here Now* has been described as some of the most sophisticated in pop history. Followers of Noel and Liam Gallagher and their band have been teased with drips of information disseminated in hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles, while radio stations have fought for snatches of the album. When it goes on sale on August 21, it is expected to sell 700,000 copies in three

days, climbing straight to No 1 in the charts.

Only a handful of reviewers have been allowed to hear the hallowed tape, and they have had to sign detailed contracts with Creation Records promising that they will not play it to anyone else. Retailers have been forbidden to open at midnight on August 21 to sell the first copies of what is almost certain to be the biggest-selling album of the year.

Instead, they will go on sale at 9am on the day, with HMV opening all 100 stores early and providing breakfast and "first-day cover" certificates.

Mike McGeevee, programming editor of *Music and Media*, *Billboard*'s sister publication in Britain, said: "It has all been about hype, but it is a very clever marketing ploy. It creates a real buzz. There is an atmosphere not unparalleled with the Beatles."

He added that allowing fans to hear the album but not to buy it was to create a "Pavlov's dogs" effect, but he said it could backfire. "It's a tease," he said. "If you are hearing something you want but you



Clare Kember, DJ at the Virgin megastore in Oxford Street, preparing for the preview of *Be Here Now*

can't buy it, you could end up feeling very frustrated. And all this waiting increases the expectation of the album. Let's hope it's good."

Oasis's recent single, *D'You Know What I Mean*, caused some ill feeling as it was

promised exclusively to Radio 1, but other commercial stations got it at the same time, scooping the BBC and leading to on-air sniping between the various DJs.

Photographic Performance Ltd, the body which licenses

records for public use in Britain, issued an almost unprecedented embargo to broadcasters on their use of the album. Colleen Hue, head of external affairs at PPL, said:

"It's very, very rare. It's not something we would like to repeat. It is a huge task to carry out this exercise."

Oasis fans have been backing the band for the No 1 Christmas single. William Hill have them at 3-1 second favourites behind the Spice Girls at 5-4.

Sound and fury that signifies something big

Alan Jackson reviews the new album, and finds himself applauding a band that has taken a risk by refusing to compromise



WITH a sound that is jagger-mani-big and equally unstoppable, *Be Here Now* offers an Oasis so idiosyncratic and uncompromising as to be almost cartoon-like.

The musical equivalent to the manifestation of the Gallagher brothers (mouthy, anti-establishment and in-your-face, but, despite it all, with hearts of tarnished gold) that has so captivated their fans, it shows itself simultaneously ready to buy a drink for all its mates, and to cuff sceptics around the ears with its full-on wall of sound.

Given that nothing threatens anti-heroic status quite like a gesture of compromise to the mainstream, how much more efficient can one loud, proud rock LP be?

Inevitably, all those jelled into a false sense of security by Noel Gallagher's public endorsements of his songwriting idol Burt Bacharach, and by the Mike Flowers' *Pops* camp-but-nice reconstruction of *Wonderwall*, are going to find themselves strapped around the face and smarting. Even though *Be Here Now's* two most rounded and satisfying songs, *The Girl In The Dirty Shirt* and *Don't Go Away*, are romantic and affecting at heart, they could hardly be described as easy listening. And elsewhere, with producer Owen Morris taking on the mantle of a father-day Phil Spector, the sound is uneasy indeed.

But what, if anything, does it signify, all this sound and fury? It signifies that with this, their third album, Oasis are demanding to be viewed as world contenders, not just the gangland vultures of 1995's Britpop wars. There is absolutely nothing shy or self-effacing about these 11 new songs; collectively they form possibly the most swaggering, unapologetic studio set we have heard since U2 hit their commercial peak.

What will either charm or alarm the band's hoped-for and potentially vast new audience in America is just how little attention these same songs pay to what has been happening musically outside of the British Isles. Noting the genre's tendency towards cannibalism, critic and commentator David Quantick once predicted "pop will eat itself".

Be Here Now is the result of that feasting and regurgitation: from the inevitable Beatles to Led Zeppelin, the Small Faces to Motörhead, the Hoople, all worthwhile domestic rock life (even their own back-catalogue) is here, the reference points sometimes so little disguised as to appear barely half-chewed.

What binds this stew together in convincing and, ultimately, celebratory fashion, however, is the Gallaghers' sheer and infectious self-confidence. Track after track is allowed to expand to suit itself: most clock in at around the six-minute mark, with *All Around The World* (the compositionally weakest of all) stretching to a full nine, with an additional reprise.

Behind this sonic swagger

though, can be found endearing acknowledgements of individual weakness: "Damn my education/I can't find the words to say/All the things caught in my mind." It is this facility for such everydayish tones, at once cocky but vulnerable, that is central to the Oasis success story.



Mouthy: Gallagher brothers Liam, left, and Noel

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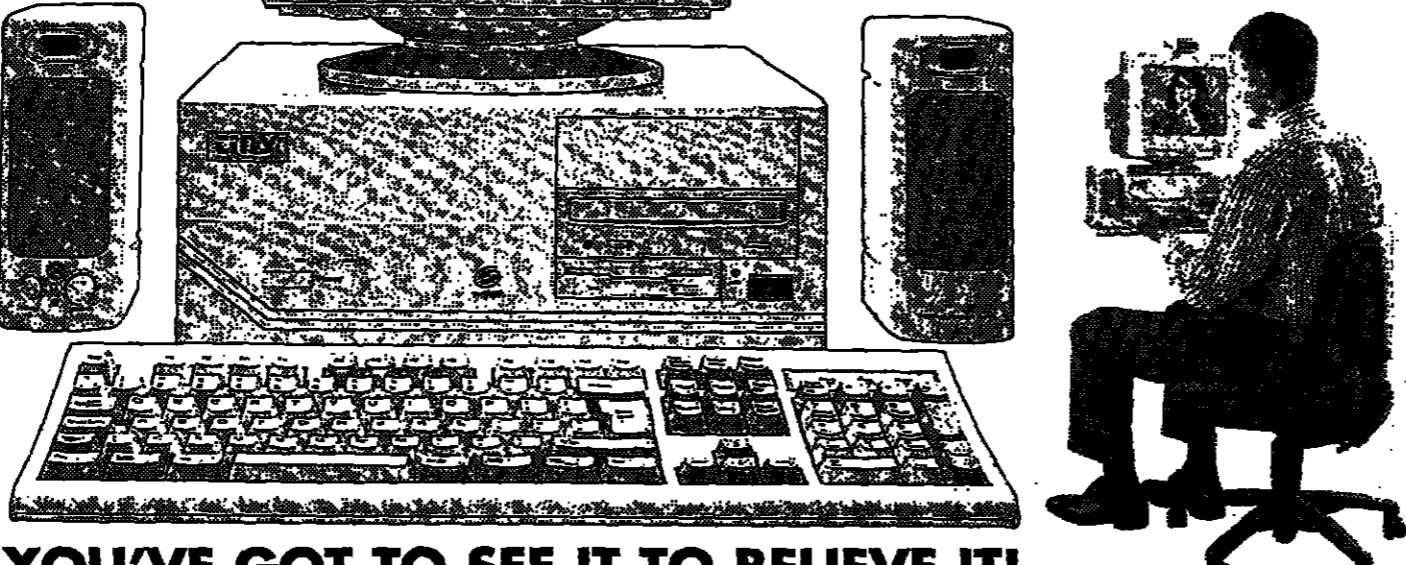
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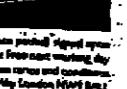
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DNA scientists join war against malaria

A century after the discovery of how it spreads, the disease kills 2 million people a year. Nigel Hawkes reports

A HUNT for a new weapon against malaria has been launched as the disease threatens to get out of control around the world. The £8 million research project, starting a century almost to the day since the British physician Ronald Ross discovered that mosquitoes were the carriers for malaria parasite, and passed it on when they bit.

Scientists working for the Wellcome Trust, a British charity, will spend three years working out the full genetic sequence of the parasite, to identify features that may be susceptible to attack by drugs.

Malaria kills more than two million people a year, most of them children. It is increasingly resistant to drugs, and poses a threat to tourists from the West who visit malaria-prone regions. The disease has spread back into India, Brazil, Sri Lanka and Turkey, and there have been sporadic cases in many US states.

Dr John Stephenson, of the Wellcome Trust, said: "The rapid and continuing increase of drug-resistant malaria parasites is presenting the possibility that soon there may no longer be any effective treatment." The new project is

based at the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus at Hinxton, near Cambridge.

Genetic information that controls the life cycle of the parasite *Plasmodium falciparum* is stored in the base-pairs which link together to make up the DNA. It is estimated to contain 30 million base-pairs, making it considerably larger than any other organism so far sequenced.

The work is likely to be shared with an American team, but final details have yet to be worked out. Dr Stephenson said: "This important and innovative initiative will accelerate the pace of research into this devastating disease and identify tens of thousands of novel drug and vaccine targets, instead of the few currently available."

Malaria has become resistant to chloroquine, the cheapest and most widely available drug. Resistance has also developed to a more recent drug, mefloquine (Lariam), which many people are reluctant to take because of reported side-effects such as dizziness.

Traditional methods of controlling the disease — including mosquito nets, insecticides and draining the pools where



Ross: he won a Nobel prize for his discovery

the mosquitoes breed — have failed in many countries.

An international conference next week in Hyderabad, India, will bring together 650 scientists, public health officials and funding agencies.

Marking the centenary of Ross's discovery, the aim is to raise awareness and call for concerted action to prevent what the Malaria Foundation calls "a major worldwide public health disaster".

Before 20 August 1897, when Ross worked out how the parasite spread, the popular view had been that it was caused by contaminated air (hence malaria) or through infected water. Others had

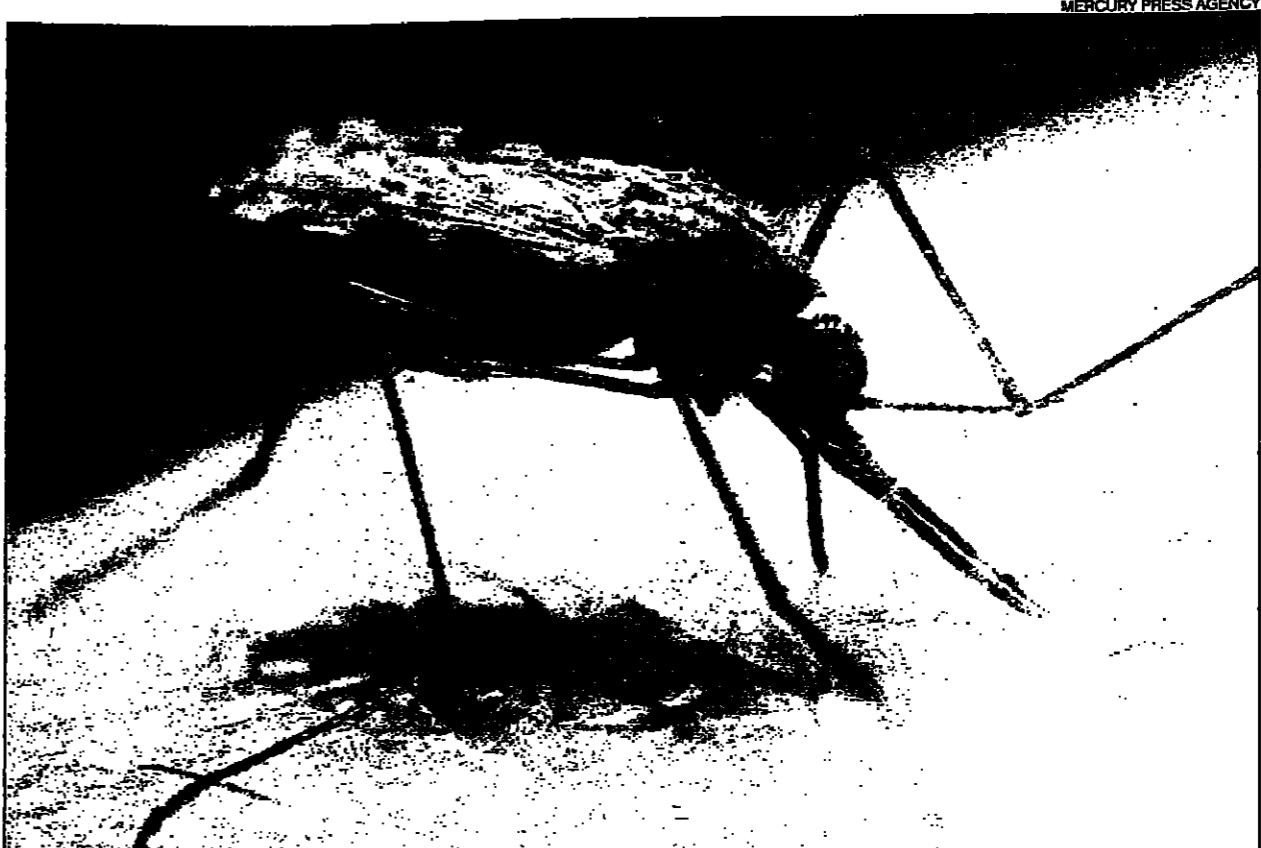
speculated that the mosquito was responsible. Ross, who worked for the Indian Medical

Service, proved it by dissecting mosquitoes, including one which had just fed on a malaria patient.

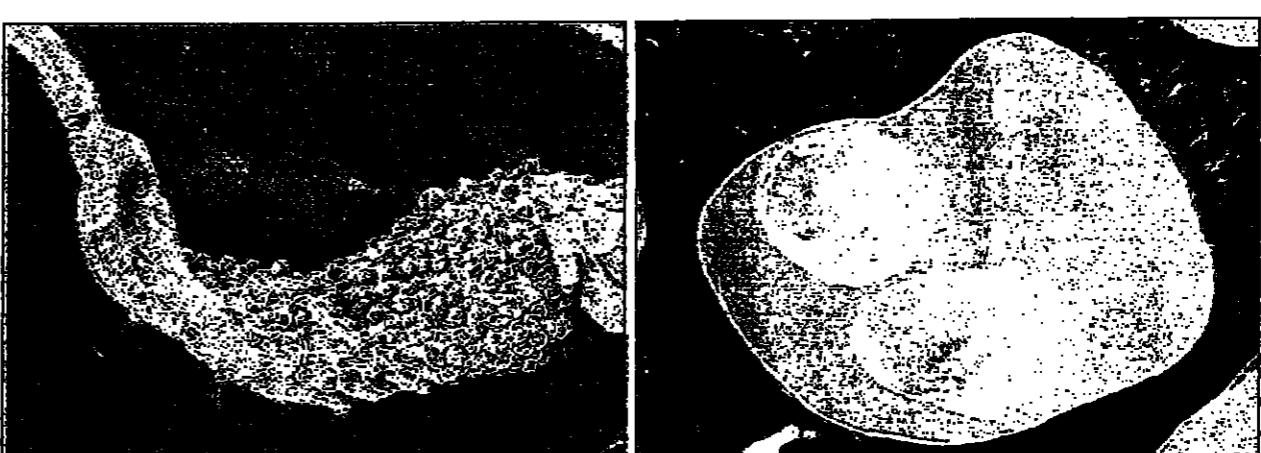
This mosquito yielded the parasites that had already been identified as the cause of the disease. By killing mosquitoes or preventing them from breeding or biting, it was discovered that the disease could be controlled. Ross won the Nobel Prize in 1902, and was knighted in 1911. He died in 1932.

Perhaps the greatest early success from his discovery was in Panama, a graveyard for the French team which had tried and failed to build a canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Poor planning, disease and a financial scandal defeated them. Later, the successful American team had the advantage of Ross's work, and the canal was completed in 1914.

Malaria was common in England between the times of Elizabeth I and Victoria; Shakespeare called it theague. It disappeared between 1860 and 1930. Medical historians have long argued over how this happened, suggesting better housing, easier availability of quinine and the introduction of the turnip in 1860 as a winter feed for cattle. The turnip enabled many animals to be kept alive through the winter instead of being slaughtered, and mosquitoes preferred to bite cows than human beings.



The inside story: a mosquito feasts on human blood while, along its stomach wall, below left, malaria parasites are shown in blue on an electron-micrograph picture. Right, parasites (blue and pink) attack a red blood cell



Elderly drivers less dangerous than young

RECENTLY, when driving from the Reform Club, I was stopped by the police. Why, they asked, was I driving so slowly? The reply that I was "thinking" was considered inadequate and I was asked to take a breath test. When their meter failed to show a response, they repeated the test and then their initial question.

They were decent officers, doing their duty, and afterwards they patted me on the back and said: "Ah well, doctor, if you like driving slowly that's your right."

Fortunately, most older motorists travel slowly. Steady driving and the caution born of experience, helps to

MEDICAL BRIEFING

minimise tragedies such as that in Hampshire on Monday, when a mother died and her baby was injured after a woman aged 84 died at the wheel of her car and crashed into them.

Sudden fatalities are rare. A patient with a coronary thrombosis feels crushing chest pain and nausea, which gives time to draw into the side of the road.

Many strokes are heralded by the worst headache that can be imagined and only the most selfish, or brave, would fail to pull into a layby.

Cardiac arrhythmia, some forms of stroke, and seizures can cause immediate paralysis, but fortunately these are rare while an elderly person is driving.

Chronic problems are more likely to create a risk for older

drivers. Failing eyesight and increasing dementia may lead to an accident if a motorist pulls out at a junction without looking properly.

The law says that eyesight should be tested in good light and does not differentiate between day and night vision. Even at dusk, eyesight begins to fail in older patients and this could make driving unsafe. Oncoming headlights can cause disabling dazzle, particularly if cataracts are developing. Glaucoma shrinks the field of vision so a pedestrian on the pavement may not be noticed.

Older patients are more likely to nod off if they have

had a sleepless night and attempt to travel too far the next day. Long-distance driving should always include time set aside for a rest or nap on the way.

Once a driver has reached the age of 70, the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency asks pertinent questions before a licence is renewed. A medical examination is requested if there are doubts. Road deaths are, however, more likely to be caused by a speeding young driver than a sick elderly motorist.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFFORD

X-ray vision helps doctors to reach their diagnosis

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

DOCTORS at Hammersmith Hospital in west London can now consult X-ray images on screen, using an electronic system inaugurated yesterday by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary.

The system allows doctors to enlarge part of the image for closer study, and to fetch it on monitors in the hospital's wards, clinics, operating theatres and casualty units. Patients should benefit from

receiving lower doses of radiation, and an end to delays caused by not having X-ray film available.

The £13 million Picture Archiving and Communication System is the result of seven years' research. Nuala Martin, manager of imaging at the hospital, said: "This system offers enormous advantages. There is no risk of images being lost or misfiled, and because the technology involved the radiation dosage is less than for conventional X-rays. Another advantage, for

doctors and patients, is that the image can be manipulated on screen to enhance or magnify areas. So instead of having to take several X-rays to ensure accurate diagnosis, we take only one."

She believes that the system is an important step towards worldwide "tele-medicine". There is no reason why in the future a patient need travel to receive an opinion from a specialist — their images will simply be sent to the consultant's own computer and advice be given by telephone."

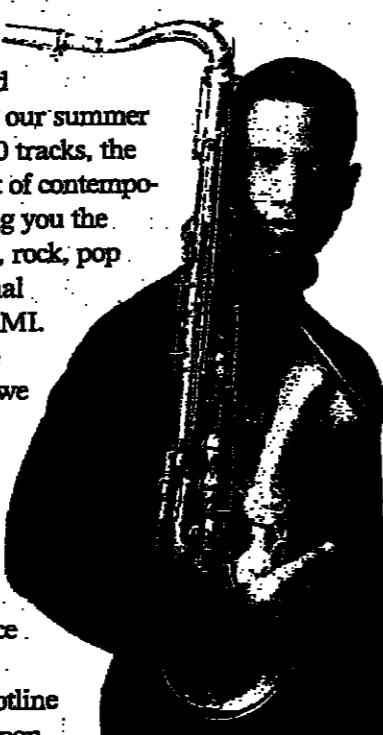
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 (04) Leon Parker *Epistropy*
 (05) Peter White *City of Lights*
 (06) Marcus Roberts
Reflecting Mirrors
 (07) Antonio Carlos Jobim
So Danco Samba
 (08) Henry Threadgill
Make Hot and Give
 (09) Terence Blanchford
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EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Comedians are left labouring for laughter

Dalya Alberge
reports on how
the political
satirists are
already missing
their Tory targets

REAL life has gone beyond a joke for "alternative" comedians. For years, they had never had it so good. Now they are lamenting the passing of the Conservatives

Comics at the Edinburgh Festival yesterday expressed regret that a wealth of targets for left-wing mockery had been changed by the arrival of Labour. The problem has been partly blamed for a fall in the number of stand-ups on the fringe, from 200 last year to about 140.

"It's messed up my act," Bootsy Graffoe grumbled to his audience on Monday night. "I used to be able to say, 'The Government — what bastards' and get a laugh. Now, it's, 'The Government — hurrah! Let's work with them.' Not quite the same, he said, getting a laugh.

Off stage, he described the Tory downfall as a tragic loss to comedy: "Labour are doing the things we've wanted them to do all this time."

Junior Simpson, a young comedian hailed as the new Lenny Henry, said that the morning after celebrating the election result he woke up to a hangover and the realisation that he had pages of material to rip up. "The rise of what they used to call alternative comedy and the Tory Government go hand in hand. Now, after the 18 years — and a lot of people's material was based along that — they may have to turn the page and move on."

One of his gags was prompted by Tony Blair revealing that he smacks his children. Simpson impersonated John Major, saying: "I never slap my kids. My kids slap me."

Nica Burns, director of the Perrier Award, Britain's most prestigious comedy prize, said that most comedians were Labour voters: "Even if Tony Blair blows it, it's going to be very hard to knock them. He's PC."

"Comedy is about subversion and fighting against something. The more hated



Graffoe: Labour had "messed up" his act

political work, he is producing a topical comment show, *Stuff The Week*. The winner of the LWT Writing Award will receive a £1,000 cheque and a commission to develop a script for television.

Mr Barclay said that comedians were wondering what was left to be angry about. "I remember John Cleese saying that satire can only exist under a right-wing government. He may be right." Mr Barclay's team has been debating whether there is satire to be done under a Labour Government. "It demands more original thought."

Other comics felt that Labour was simply too dull. Donna McPhail, who is appearing at the Gilded Balloon theatre, said: "They don't seem to have a sense of humour. I'm on the verge of thinking they're too boring. Let's get the Tories back."

However, her hopes were raised by Robin Cook's infidelity. Her latest routine also touches on Cherie Blair, the Prime Minister's wife. "She's a bit of a slapper, opening her front door. But I liked her nylon nightie and the mascara coming down her face. I used to say Norma doesn't go to bed, they hang her up in a closet."

Marcus Brigstocke, winner of the 1996 BBC New Comedian of the Year award, felt that some comedians would be uneasy knocking Labour, while others, such as himself, felt that Labour policies were so close to the Tories that nothing had changed.

Some of the more radical left-wing comedians had no hesitation in attacking a Labour Government. Mark Thomas, who will be appearing at Edinburgh's Queen's Hall, said: "Mark Twain once said that the last person you want in the White House is someone who wants to be there. That's the attitude people should take."

New Labour had not yet done enough in government to allow comedians to find a theme, he said. "There are plenty of characters to go for, but they are still fresh and also very shrewd. Cook and Mandelson look like good targets, but are too bright to be got. Saying Mandelson's up to something sinister is

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tives had particularly excelled at making "fools of themselves", but added that there was plenty of time for Labour to match them.

Ned Sherrin, another *TW3* veteran, said: "Labour should enjoy the full as they will have years of striping. It will be like Wilson's Government, loving *TW3* in Opposi-

tion but hating it in power. Harman and Dobson have all the comic potential of a George Brown. Peter Mandelson will be funny when he comes out of his coffin at night."

David Baddiel, a younger member of the comedy establishment, felt that political comedy had been "on the wane for years." "I have always made a conscious decision not to do it, as everyone was doing it when I started," he said.

Baddiel, who interviewed Tony Blair for *The Enormous Election*, a television show

that sought to introduce politics to a younger audience, added: "The sort of gags I do about politicians are not political: more situational or observational. There is no message like you used to get with Ben Elton."

"People can also be topical without being political. You can joke about Dodi and Diana and still be satirical."

BY MARK HENDERSON

VETERANS of political satire were certain yesterday that the Government's comedy honeymoon would soon be over. Barry Took, who took aim at politicians in *That Was The Week That Was* in the 1960s, said comedians would go for whichever party was in power.

"There has been political satire and jokes as long as there has been writing. On *TW3* we took the piss out of Harold Wilson every bit as much as we did Macmillan and Douglas-Home," Took said yesterday.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Brocket tryst inquiry

The Prison Service is investigating claims that Lord Brocket, who is serving five years for a £45 million vintage car fraud, spent an hour in bed with a woman during a fake medical appointment. Ford open prison in West Sussex is checking an appointment made by Brocket with a physiotherapist. A prison officer took him to a house ten miles from the prison and watched as Brocket was ushered inside by an attractive young woman. The curtains were drawn and Brocket spent an hour inside. The officer reported the incident to the governor.

Pilot named

The two men who died in a helicopter crash near the M6 in Lancashire were named as Peter Thorn, the pilot, of Weybridge, Surrey, and Peter Husler, 38, of Epworth, Yorkshire. They were carrying out gas pipeline checks.

Sky-jumper hurt

A parachutist was taken to hospital after leaping 400ft from a 41-storey building in the Barbican, London. The man, who injured his leg, was among a group of five jumpers. The others landed safely and ran off.

99 call hoaxer

A 16-year-old who made hoax 999 calls was given 100 hours' community service and had his radio equipment confiscated. The teenager from Leeds admitted at a youth court in Bradford to breaches of the Wireless Telegraphy Act.

Wife due home

The wife of the British pastor killed by bandits in Hungary is to return home this week after recovering from treatment. Jo Pollard, 55, had her jaw and nose broken in the attack which left her husband Michael, 62, dead.

Rescue flashback

The yachtsman Tony Bullimore, who survived for four days after capsizing in the Southern Ocean in January, is to recreate his ordeal in Tasmania for a documentary. A replica of his upturned yacht will be built in a pool.



Jokes will be on Mandelson

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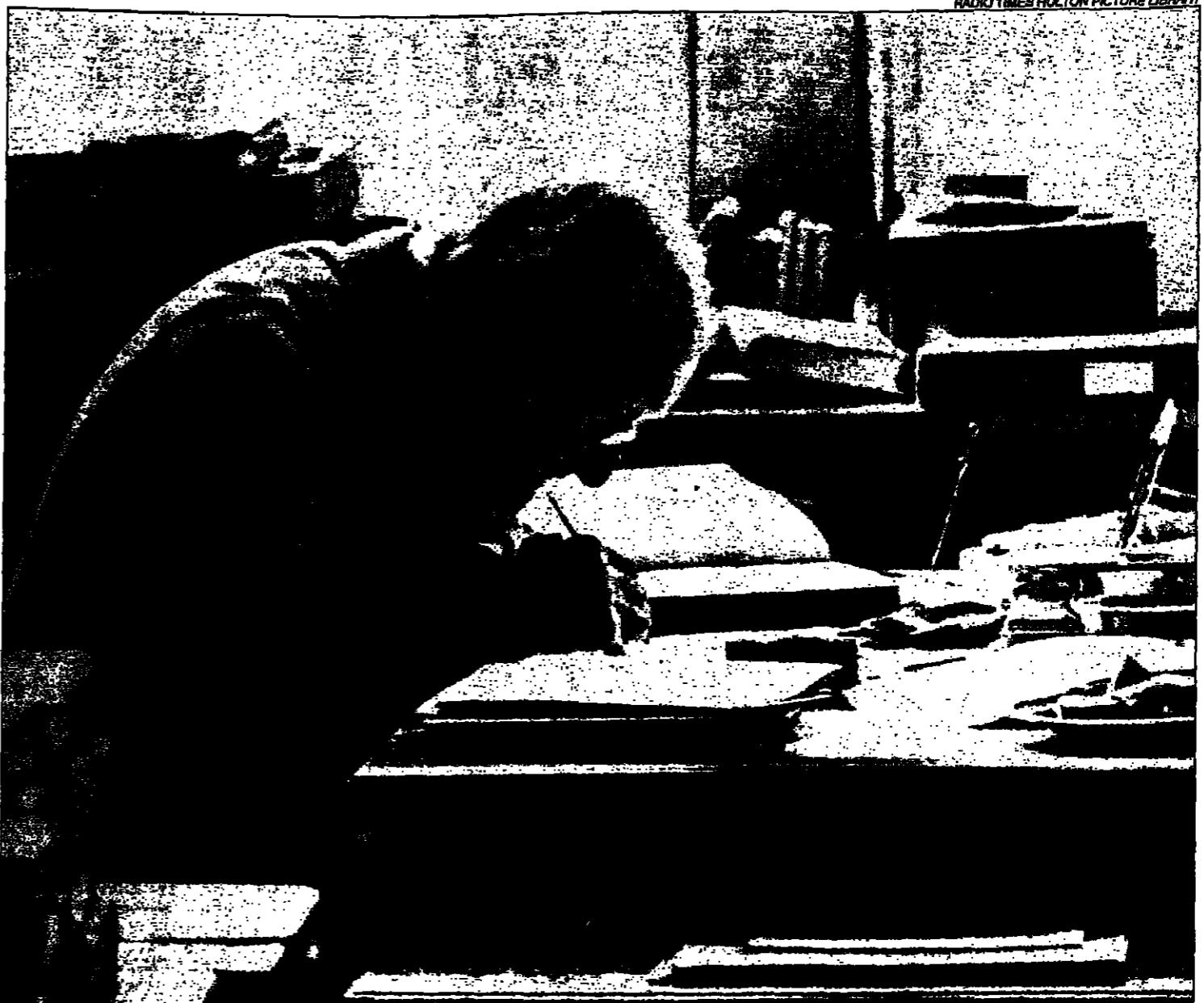
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The Queen and Disraeli, who said that with royalty, flattery should be "laid on with a trowel"



Gladstone at his desk. Elected to Parliament in 1832, he was still an MP — and Prime Minister — in 1894, at the age of 84

Rivals who were the chalk and cheese of politics

Politics was essentially a spectator sport in Victorian times, and that was true in more senses than one. It was not just a question of the vast crowds that would turn out to hear political speeches: W.E. Gladstone spoke to an audience of at least 25,000 in Bingley Hall, Birmingham, in 1877. (Many Premiership football clubs would count themselves lucky to have that number of people on their terraces today.)

Yet, at the same time, going to see and hear great men was the limit of participation allowed to most citizens. The Great Reform Bill of 1832 had increased the electorate merely from 435,000 to 652,000. Although Disraeli's Second Reform Bill of 1867 raised the total number of voters to nearly two million, it was left for Gladstone with his Third Reform Bill of 1884 not merely to increase the electorate (all, of course, men) nearly four million, but also to extend the franchise to the inhabitants of the countryside. (Country folk, presumably in deference to feudalism, had not been beneficiaries of the previous two Reform Bills.)

Party alignments in those days were also a much more fluid business. When Victoria came to the throne in 1837, her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, may have been nominally a Whig, but by temperament and instinct he was a Tory.

Melbourne had been totally unenthusiastic about Lord John Russell's Reform Bill of 1832, and he was never reconciled to Sir Robert Peel's repeal of the Corn Laws in 1845 — the measure that prompted Benjamin Disraeli to remark that a Tory Prime Minister had "caught the Whigs bathing and walked off with their clothes".

That kind of thing was not to happen in British politics

again until the advent of Blairism and new Labour. However, if they were not partisans, Victorian politics were still very much personality-dominated. If, only in longevity, Gladstone bestrode the era like no one else, he was first elected to Parliament in 1832 and was still an MP, and indeed Prime Minister, at the age of 84 in 1894.

Gladstone's only rival, Disraeli, though he certainly illuminated the political firmament, dazed for a much briefer period. The two of them, of course, had once been members of the same political party. That was back at the dawn of Gladstone's famously referred to him, in the *Edinburgh Review* of 1839 as "the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories".

Disraeli, to be fair to him, was never one of those. Indeed, from the moment in the 1840s that he risked a flat fee about never having asked for a job, he was always one of the great chancers of politics — the quality that, no doubt, makes him the "favourite Tory" of left-wing politicians such as Michael Foot.

How such an "adventurer, pure and simple" (to borrow Foot's words again) became the venerated icon of modern progressive Toryism must remain one of the many impenetrable "mysteries" attached

to such ancestor worship. For Disraeli was, of course, first and foremost an imperialist, the man who did not merely purchase the Suez Canal for Queen Victoria ("You have it, Ma'am, it is yours") but also had her created Empress of India (not that she ever went there, preferring to have rather questionable Indian retainers).

In her political attitudes, Victoria always spoke for the women of the country

ers summoned to her service in London).

To give the old charlatan his due, there were never any flies on him. It was he, after all, who once cynically observed: "Everyone likes flattery and when you come to royalty who should lay it on with a trowel?" (Which is roughly what he did.)

NEXT: Nursing with Nightingale, and the engineer who built London's sewers. How the Victorians invented cleanliness and revolutionised public health



Debt-ridden Disraeli was showered with royal gifts

Kindness to his Queen reaped rich rewards, writes Alan Hamilton

What does a Queen give her favourite Prime Minister as a token of her esteem? Benjamin Disraeli picked up an earldom, but he also acquired a houseful of pictures and superior knick-knacks showered on him by a monarch who believed that none of her ministers had shown her more consideration and kindness.

Disraeli and Gladstone were probably always destined to be chalk and cheese. But, oddly, something went out of Victorian politics with Disraeli's death in 1881. The 3rd Marquess of Salisbury was, no doubt, an admirable figure, but he lacked all popular appeal. In fact he was scared of the public, as witnessed by his habit of sleep-walking towards the windows at Hatfield and quailing before an imaginary mob that Salisbury feared, was about to break in.

Of course, the mob did eventually break into modern politics, with universal suffrage first coming into play with the "flapper" vote at the 1929 general election. The joke was that it proved to be the best insurance policy the Tories had ever taken out. Had they but realised it, in her political attitudes Victoria had always spoken for the women of England.

Unlike Gladstone, who enjoyed chopping down trees, Disraeli preferred to plant them. The grounds of Hughenden exhibit the fruits of his devotion to forestry, although many of the original



Disraeli's dining room, with Victoria's portrait

trees have been replaced. It is still a particularly pleasant place.

Born Jewish but baptised an Anglican at 15, Disraeli entered the Commons in 1837, when Jews were banned from Westminster. He had an immense confidence in his talents even before he entered politics. In his diary for 1833, displayed in the House, he wrote: "My mind is a continental mind. It is a revolution-

ary mind. I am only truly great in action. If ever I am placed in a truly eminent position, I shall prove this. I could rule the House of Commons, although there would be a great prejudice against me at first. It is the most jealous assembly in the world."

As a novelist, he despised most contemporary fiction, except, of course, his own. "If I

want to read a novel, I write

one," he remarked. He sent Victoria a complete set of his works; she responded with an elaborately bound volume of Goethe.

In a bedroom at Hughenden are displayed his formal robes as Chancellor of the Exchequer, which by rights he should have handed to his successor. But he was determined that Gladstone should not have them, forcing the great man to have a set of his own made — a set still available for Gordon Brown's use should he overcome his distaste for formal dress.

On Disraeli's death in 1881, Victoria came to Hughenden and sat alone in his study. He declined burial at Westminster Abbey, preferring the country church at the end of his drive. Inside, there is a memorial to him erected by Victoria, with a text from the Book of Proverbs: "King's love him that speaketh right."

Hughenden Manor, Buckinghamshire (National Trust), 1½ miles N of High Wycombe. Open Wed-Sun, afternoons only (grounds from midday). Adults £3.90, children £1.90

Country retreat bursting with history's junk

The Gladstone family were great hoarders. Alan Hamilton picks over the clutter



Fasque, the Gladstone family home at Fettercairn, Aberdeenshire

Country houses open to the public can sometimes be sterile places. But not Fasque, the Scottish family seat of the Gladstones in the deep hinterland between Dundee and Aberdeen, where the great man spent much of his childhood and to which he regularly retreated in his older years. Fasque is not only still lived in by Gladstone's great-grandson, it is a gloriously disorganized clutter.

The Gladstone family appear to have been incapable of throwing anything away. Gladstone bags, jammed and rusted shut but still tantalisingly full of goodness knows what, litter the hall. The dairy overflows with a collection of old milk bottles, all different. Ancient carpet sweepers and brass candlesticks lurk in dark corners of the servants' quarters. On the shelf is an elderly megaphone for bellowing instructions at grouse beaters.

As I poked about below stairs, among enormous cane salmon rods with brass reels, gun cases, walking sticks, and a cane device for drying waders, the curator produced a large brown paper parcel tied with string he had found behind a chair only the day before. Its label declared it to be a consignment of paper shooting targets, and it was plastered with "urgent" stickers. It was still waiting to be opened: the postmark showed it had been dispatched from London in 1922. Fasque is the perfect illustration of

memorabilia including letters, photographs, ornate gifts from grateful town councils and silver spades with which he cut first sods. Fasque hopes to add Gladstone's battered old red budget box, now that Gordon Brown has replaced it with a smart new number made by apprentices in his Fife constituency.

But it is downstairs that truly reeks of another age. The servants' dining hall is set out as a schoolroom for estate children, equipped with a prehistoric electric radiator and an ancient glass device for demonstrating electricity. In the corridors are first-generation brass telephones and speaking tubes for communication between butler and master, and dusty boxes of Balmoral Sperm — a Victorian brand of candle.

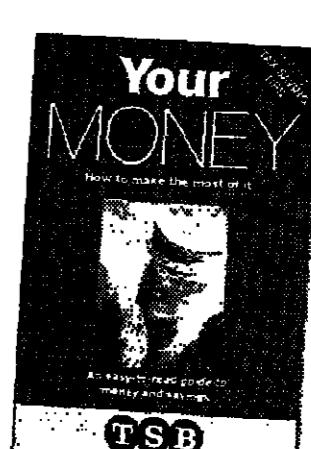
Fasque employed up to 15 domestic staff, and a good number of those would have spent back-breaking Mon-

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How Elvis tried to aid Nixon in drugs crusade

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE most bizarre White House encounter of modern times — when Elvis Presley met Richard Nixon — was commemorated by the US Administration yesterday.

Adding to the considerable hype marking the twentieth anniversary of Presley's death next Saturday, the National Archives released copious details and photographs of the Internet from official records of the meeting.

Discarding its usual stodgy image, the National Archives' Presley site recounts how, on the morning of December 21, 1970, he arrived unannounced at the White House to deliver a rambling five-page letter to Nixon written on American Airlines stationery.

The rock and roll pioneer wanted to give Nixon a chrome-plated Colt .45, "a real collector's gun", and to obtain for himself the credentials of a federal agent in the war on

drugs. Presley offered to serve privately against what he considered to be threats to America. He wrote: "The drug culture, the hippie elements, the Students for a Democratic Society, Black Panthers etc, do NOT consider me as their enemy or as they call it The Establishment. I call it America and I love it. Sir, I can and will be of any service that can help The Country out."

Bud Krogh, a Nixon aide, thought the letter was a hoax until a call to Presley's hotel established that he was indeed in Washington. The meeting was approved, even though H. R. Haldeman, Nixon's humorless chief of staff, wrote on the memo "You must be kidding".

Presley was resplendent in a purple velvet cape, tight-fitting matching trousers, a high-collared white shirt open to his chest, a gold medallion around his neck and a gold belt buckle as wide as a tyre. Nixon, rising from his desk, said: "It's very good to meet you, Mr Presley. I appreciate your offer to help us on the drug problem." Despite his abuse of prescription drugs that led to his death in 1977, Presley did denounce street drugs at every opportunity.



A respondent Elvis Presley meets President Nixon at the White House in 1970. The President said: "It's very good to meet you, Mr Presley. I appreciate your offer to help us on the drug problem."

for Presley to maintain his credibility.

They agreed to keep their meeting secret and, incredibly, no word of it leaked out for 13 months. Nixon consented to Presley having a badge as an honorary agent of the federal Narcotics Bureau.

Presley was so ecstatic that he hugged the President, a gesture that evidently caught Nixon off guard. He responded awkwardly with a pat on the shoulder.

Mr Krogh, now a Seattle lawyer, says: "The meeting was one of the most improbable things that ever happened in the White House. The odds are a million to one that anybody could drive up, hand in a letter to the President and have a meeting three hours later."

Jerry Schilling, one of the bodyguards and now a film producer, said: "You could see there was a meeting of minds between these two guys who

were both at the top of their profession. The top is pretty lonely, no matter what profession you're in."

As for the Colt .45, it was checked over first by the Secret Service and now has pride of place at the Nixon Library and birthplace in Yorba Linda, California.

The meeting can be found at: <http://www.nara.gov/exhibit.html>

□ Carter concern: Jimmy Carter, the former President,

Kennedy clan lose leading supporter

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

ONE of the most consistent supporters of the Kennedys, *The New York Times*, appears at last to have turned against its favourite clan.

In a hard-hitting editorial published yesterday entitled "Naked Kennedy Truth", the newspaper described John F Kennedy Jr, the son of President Kennedy, as "vapid", attacking him for a piece he wrote this week for his own magazine, *George*, in which he described two of his cousins as "poster boys for bad behaviour".

"John Kennedy's little essay", the newspaper said, is a "sign of the end of the Kennedys as an entitled political class".

The editorial continues: "Members of the third generation, like Representative Joseph Kennedy [the son of the late Robert Kennedy] in his faltering bid for the Massachusetts governorship, will have to be judged on the content of what they write and say, rather than as packages of money and genes."

The tone of the editorial would appear to suggest a pronounced departure from *The New York Times*'s customary pro-Kennedy stance, which it has maintained unwaveringly through a succession of recent paedophiles, rape charges and messy divorces.

Insiders suggest that Mr Kennedy's latest offering in *George*, which the editorial calls "sophomoric", has proved the last straw for Howell Raines, the editor of the editorial page.

A thundering Southern moralist, he is believed to have been deeply offended by Mr Kennedy's description of his cousin Michael's alleged sexual relationship with an underage babysitter as a "hedge against morality".

"John Kennedy should learn to call sleeping with the babysitter sleeping with the babysitter," the editorial declares.

A newspaper source said: "The *New York Times* has always had a higher idea of the Kennedys than the Kennedys have had about themselves. It was all bound to unravel one day."

Tim Hames, page 16

The letter Presley wrote to Nixon, offering to serve against what he considered were threats to the US

was reported yesterday to wonder if he could have saved Elvis Presley who phoned him while "totally stoned" weeks before his death.

Presley did not know what he was saying and the sentences were almost incoherent.

Mr Carter told *The New York Times* magazine. He said he had patiently tried to ease Presley out of his paranoid delusions, calming his fears that he was being "shadowed" by sinister forces.

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Kennedy
clan
leading
support

Leading men at the White House

In recent years
Tinseltown has
become obsessed
with goings on
in Washington

FROM GILES WHITFIELD
IN LOS ANGELES

PRESIDENT Clinton's choice of Tom Hanks as his ideal actor to portray him in a film will come as no surprise to followers of the White House genre. Hanks is the James Stewart of his day — decent, honest and entirely admirable — and the President, an avid film fan, is acutely aware of Hollywood's power to shape public opinion.

"I know [Hanks] and respect him as a person and an actor," the President said in an interview with CBS yesterday. Yet in recent years Hollywood has become as obsessed with the White House as its current occupant is with Hollywood.

The trappings of power, from jumbo jets to nuclear weapons codes, have proved irresistible to a generation of film-makers freed by Watergate from an unwritten rule that once protected the presidency from cinematic parody. The result has been a series of performances that either upstage Mr Clinton, as in Bill Pullman's defence of the planet in *Independence Day*, or leave his office even more tarnished than in real life.

Hanks won the hearts of filmgoers and Oscar voters in *Philadelphia*, *Forrest Gump* and as commander of the ill-fated Apollo 13. "I would want somebody with a lot of range and human feeling," the President explained. Yet the latest celluloid President is known less for his range than for the kind of shoot-from-the-hip heroics Mr Clinton has seldom tried. Harrison Ford, in *Air Force One*, starts by discarding his notes for a speech in Moscow and vowing never to let "political self-interest get in the way of what we know to be morally right."

Ford then singlehandedly overwhelms a band of henchmen aboard the presidential jet. For this he has been dubbed the "kick-ass President" and if reviews and the box office are any guide (550 million in 16 days), he would be elected in a



Tom Hanks, left, Bill Clinton's favourite to portray him on film, posing with James Lovell, the former Apollo 13 astronaut. Other celluloid presidents: Harrison Ford, top right, as "the kick-ass" hit of *Air Force One*; Kevin Kline with Sigourney Weaver in *Dave*; and Bill Pullman, world saviour in *Independence Day*

heartbeat were he to run for office.

"Get off my plane!" — Ford's best line — is more inspiring. *Newsweek* says, than Mr Clinton's "I didn't smoke". Meanwhile, as *Entertainment Weekly* gushed, the "but-kicking executive decisions in *Air Force One* will make you stand up and cheer for democracy".

Hollywood's tradition of fantasy presidents began with *Being There* in 1979, an inglorious time in the history of the Oval Office. After the disgrace of Watergate and the mediocrities of Presidents Ford and the early Carter years, Peter Sellers offered the alternative of an idiot sitting in the White House, propped up there by his

simple wisdom acquired as a gardener.

Kevin Kline echoed Sellers' performance with *Dave* in 1994, playing an amateur presidential impersonator, finds that common sense and some straight talking enable him to conjure social justice from corrupt chaos.

In *The American President* (1995), Michael Douglas made arduous permissible in a President, as long as he was popular and widowed. The film, about the perils of presidential dating, offered a wry contrast to Washington gossip about Mr Clinton's alleged infidelities.

The recent *Absolute Power* starred Gene Hackman as a chief executive drunk on lust

He kills a lover by mistake during an episode of rough sex, and would have got away with it but for the inside knowledge of a cat burglar played by Clint Eastwood.

Oliver Stone's Nixon, made in 1995, came closer to the raw nerve-endings of the American political establishment.

The film, in which Sir Anthony Hopkins played the villain of Watergate as a foul-mouthed and manipulative drunkard, was "paranoid and completely dishonest", the *National Review* railed.

Mr Clinton had no reason to take *Nixon* personally. The same cannot be said of *Primacy Colors* now being produced from Joe Klein's bestselling novel based closely on the 1992

White House campaign by the then Governor of Arkansas. The book depicts Jack Stanton (a thinly-disguised Clinton) as a habitual and remorseless philanderer. In the film, Stanton is being played by John Travolta, who in recent stills from the set bears an uncanny likeness to the President.

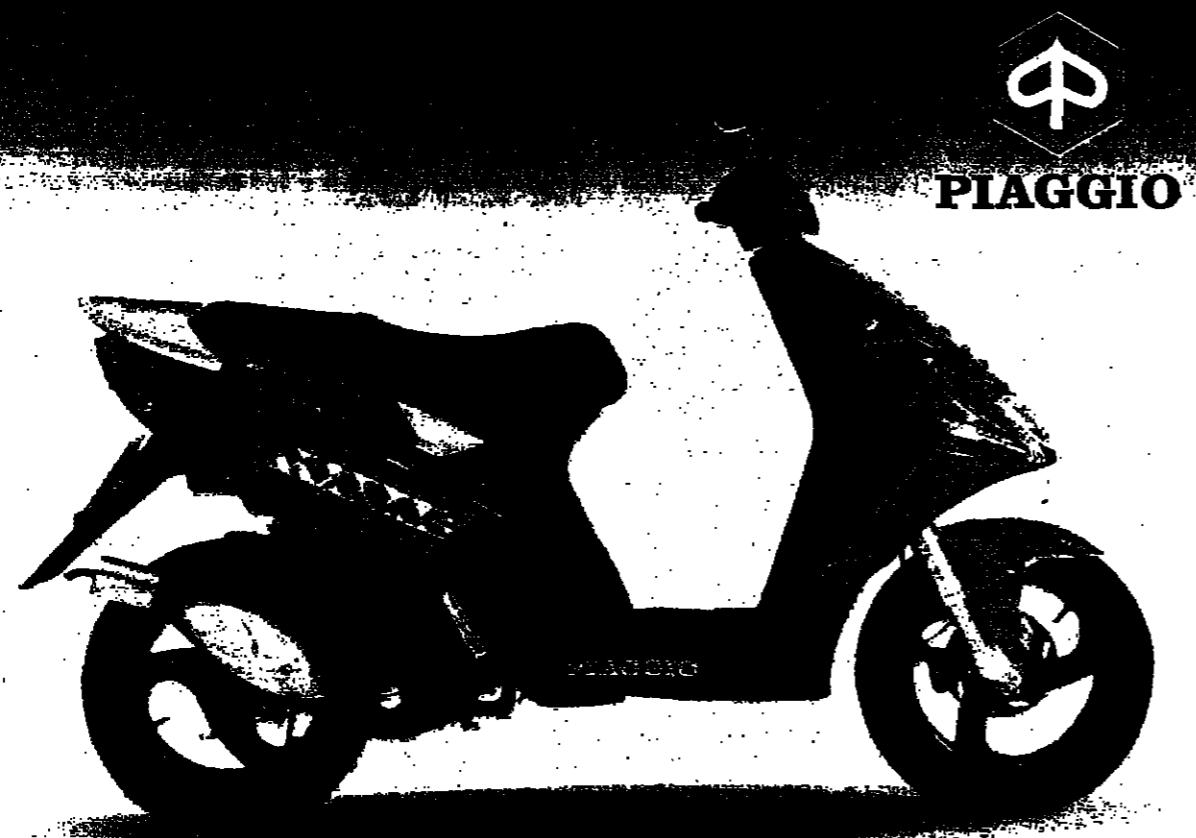
Beyond the fringes of credibility, Jack Nicholson played a crazed President under attack from outer space in last year's *Mars Attacks*. It remains to be seen whether viewers will have to suspend disbelief in *Wag the Dog*, a forthcoming thriller starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert De Niro as handlers of a President in trouble over rumours that he molested a girl scout.



PIAGGIO

REWARDING TIMES

Win one of 7 scooters



This week *The Times* gives you the chance to win one of seven fabulous Piaggio scooters worth approximately £11,600 in total. Scooters are the 90s way to get about fast, safe, ideal for getting through traffic jams, as environmentally friendly as motorised wheels get, and they cost only about three pence a mile to run.

The Vespa, a recognised style icon, was first created 50 years ago and more than 15 million have been sold worldwide. Today we feature the NRG sports scooter, a new addition to the range, with an on the road price of £1,999.

The NRG comes with larger 13ins wheels, twin "fox-eye" headlamps, upside-down forks, rear spoiler and low profile tyres, all complimenting the liquid-cooled 50cc engine. Fully automatic transmission allows the rider to

just twist-and-go. An additional attraction is a FREE insurance offer, valid until August 31, 1997. Other Piaggio scooter prizes on offer this week are: two Vespa ET2s; an ET4; a Liberty; a Zip SP (Sport Production) and a Hexagon 125cc.

HOW TO ENTER

Collect four tokens from *The Times* and send them with the entry form, appearing tomorrow, stating which scooter you would like to win. Closing date: Friday, September 12, 1997. Readers must be over 16 to enter.

For further information on the Piaggio range, call 0800 20 30 10



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WORLD SUMMARY

Marriages 'give birth to misery'

New York: Married couples are at their unhappiest when they have children, according to an American sociologist (writes Tunku Varadarajan).

Mary Benin, a researcher at Arizona State University, says children bring parents little more than misery, gloom and depression. In a paper to be presented this week to the American Sociological Association, she reports on a study of 6,785 spouses. She says happiness invariably hits rock bottom when a child is in its teens. Couples do not recover until the children leave home.

Andes rescue bid

Rio de Janeiro: Rescue workers battled to get aid to at least 600 people who faced a fifth day trapped in vehicles in a snow-blocked mountain pass in the Peruvian Andes.

Fugitive held

Berlin: Torsten Reineck, fugitive owner of a houseboat in Miami Beach where Gianni Versace's alleged killer was found dead, has been held here on tax charges. (Reuters)

Jail house rock

Tegucigalpa: About 700 inmates, the entire population of two prisons — at Trujillo and Santa Barbara in northern Honduras — escaped using picks and iron bars. (AP)

Family lashed

Tehran: The brother, sister and sister-in-law of a man sentenced to death for murdering 11 women, are to receive 70 lashes each for not reporting his crimes. (AFP)

Prison shooting

Alma Ata: Two convicts shot dead eight people, including four policemen, in a jail breakout in Petropavlovsk in northern Kazakhstan, police said. One later killed himself. (AFP)

Star accused

Los Angeles: Christian Slater, 27, star of films such as *Broken Arrow* and *True Romance*, has been arrested for allegedly biting a man in the stomach during a brawl.

Afghan allies prepare to take Kabul

Retreating Taleban poison wells and mine villagers' homes as Mujahidin drive fighters to outskirts of capital

FROM MICHAEL DYNES
IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF

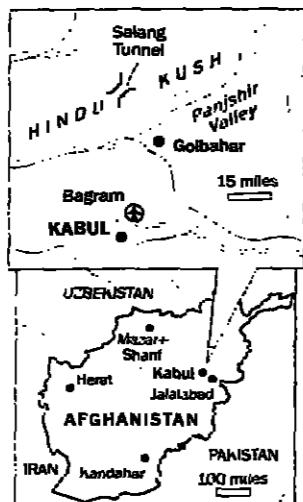
ABOUT 1,500 Mujahidin commanders gathered at the mouth of the Panjshir Valley yesterday to choose an interim government and hammer out their strategy for what they hope will be the final assault on the city of Kabul.

As General Ahmed Shah Masood, the former Government's defence chief, spelled out his plans to erect a security cordon around the city, men and military equipment poured into the Shomali Valley, north of Kabul, in anticipation of a big battle ahead.

General Masood, whose forces had withstood repeated air and ground bombardments launched by the messianic Taleban fighters, now commands unparalleled authority among the various factions that make up the anti-Taleban alliance.

The "northern alliance", made up of General Masood's Tajik fighters, the Uzbek warriors of General Abdul Malik, and the ethnic Shia militia of Karim Khalili, are quietly confident that they are at the beginning of the end of their struggle against the Islamic zealots.

This is not the first time the anti-Taleban alliance has claimed it is on the verge of victory. But they have been buoyed by their victories in the



past three months over the Taleban who have taken a terrible beating. Three weeks ago the "northern alliance" pushed the Taleban back to within 12 miles of Kabul. Now about 6,000 fighters of the alliance are positioned north of Kabul and are ready to launch a huge assault.

General Masood's forces are surprised by their easy victory in the Shomali Valley, which they recaptured for the second time in ten months. That success fuelled exaggerated expectations of a storming of the gates of Kabul early last week.

The majority of the 200,000 inhabitants of the Shomali

Valley have abandoned their homes and farms for safer ground in the hills or far-flung villages. A few remain, tending their crops, despite periodic bombardment from Taleban rocket launchers.

Reports have already reached the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif about the scorched earth policy practised by the Taleban as they were chased into the hills north of Kabul.

People returning from the front line claim that Taleban fighters had thrown dead cows into wells to poison the water supply. A huge Chinese-built pumping station that helped to irrigate the entire plain was blown up. The Taleban have also mined the mud-brick homes of the civilian population, turning them into deadly booby traps.

These actions have shocked Afghan villagers who have experienced many a horror during 18 years of constant war and civil war. The Taleban may have originally set out to win the hearts and minds of the people, but they now seem to be implementing the dictum of General William Westmoreland, commander of American forces in Vietnam till shortly after the 1968 Tet offensive: "Grab them by the balls and their hearts and minds will follow."

Red Crescent officials estimate that about 7,000 civilians

wounded in fighting over the past three months. "The number of dead is anybody's guess," an official said.

Reports here also suggest that General Masood may be orchestrating simultaneous



A guard watches over 1,600 Taleban prisoners of war at a camp in the Panjshir Valley. The Red Crescent has been denied access to the captives

assaults on the Taleban-held cities of Jalalabad, east of Kabul, and Herat in the northwest of the country. But it is the prospect of bloody street battles for control of the capital that could lead to untold casualties.

Kabul: The Red Crescent said yesterday a flare-up in fighting in Afghanistan was causing the humanitarian situation to deteriorate. In a press communiqué released in Geneva, the organisation also criticised the "northern alliance" for denying it access to an estimated 3,000 prisoners of war. It said: "The ongoing fighting has prompted a major humanitarian alert."

Of the 7,000 war wounded on both sides of the front line that the Red Crescent has

treated in the past three months, an official in Afghanistan said: "We haven't had so many people wounded in a similar period over the last three years. There are clearly signs of an escalation in the conflict." (Reuters)

Cosmopolitan outpost thrives in nation torn by 18-year war

By MICHAEL DYNES

MACHINEGUN nests bristle from the rooftops of this dusty northern desert town. Home to some 600,000 mostly Uzbeks and Tajiks, it is the most cosmopolitan city in Afghanistan, north of the rugged Hindu Kush.

Running water, erratic electricity supply and thriving bazaars, well stocked with farm produce and cheap consumer goods, set it apart from the rest of Afghanistan, which has been laid waste by 18 years of unrelenting conflict.

The occasional burnt carcass of

a Taleban tank or armoured vehicle sits oddly amid rush-hour traffic of battered yellow taxis, donkey carts, herds of camels and goats, and Chinese-made bicycles. The relics of war serve as an eerie reminder of how close the bearded Taleban zealots came to seizing this city during three days of fierce fighting last May.

Although Mazar-i-Sharif may have escaped the worst ravages of the civil war, the conflict has taken its toll on the city and its inhabitants. The mud-walled buildings are in a state of chronic disrepair. Social services have all but dis-

appeared. There are a few tattered roads, but most are made from mud and gravel and are impassable during the rainy season.

Taxes are still collected, but most of the revenue is siphoned off for the war effort. Public salaries are frozen at old levels, if they are paid at all. Afghans boast that after 18 years of war they have the best

surgeons in the world: but pigeons fly in and out of operating theatres. Inflation has sent prices soaring and public amenities are non-existent.

This is a city of mud and open sewage. Human effluent flows out of every house into the street. During winter, mud and faeces mix together to form a stinking

quagmire. In summer, the lethal concoction is dried by the sun, blown around by the wind, and settles on produce on offer at the market stalls. Little wonder that typhoid, dysentery and tuberculosis are rampant.

Women cocooned in burqas, the traditional blue, tent-like covering worn by women in Afghanistan, dart around the streets like ghosts. The Muslim attitude to women in the north is more liberal than the version applied by the Taleban in the south. Women can walk around the city freely although they cannot drive. Their job is to

look after home and family while the men go off and fight.

The city is awash with officers of United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Crescent and assorted non-governmental organisations — all dashing about in expensive, four-wheel-drive vehicles. Admittedly, they are a source of income for some of the more fortunate locals who get jobs with them.

But they are also a source of resentment. Many outside observers expressed surprise when UN offices were ransacked by locals during the fighting in May. The

fact that offices of the Children's Fund were looted by their own scores were being settled.

For the most part, inhabitants of the city display the traditional Afghan hospitality towards strangers. Ask how to locate a local address, and you will soon be surrounded by a crowd of people pointing in different directions. But if you break the 10pm curfew, you are likely to be confronted by a Mujahidin fighter shouting a rocket-propelled grenade launcher in your face. It is an experience not to be repeated.

£500 AWARI PROBLEM by Paul Lamford*



Week two of *The Times* Challenge of the Mind competition with £10,000 worth of prizes to be won. To coincide with the first Mind Sports Olympiad, at the Royal Festival Hall, London, from August 18 to 24, and how to enter, call 0171-703 2828.

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Blair family holiday drags sleepy village into the limelight

THE two hundred inhabitants of this sleepy village south of Toulouse, who for the past four years have kept Tony Blair's French holiday refuge discreetly hidden, yesterday woke up to find themselves famous and their cover blown.

"Yes, my children play with Mr Blair's 'children,'" said Gilbert Boucher, the village carpenter and joiner who doubles as caretaker at the nearby 12th-century château where the Blairs are expected to arrive this weekend after spending two weeks in Tuscany.

M Boucher seemed bemused and amused by the sudden limelight, as television cameramen filmed him, the village sweeper and a lone tractor carrying hay. "Nothing much moves in Saint Martin d'Oydes, particularly in the heat of an August day. The little post office by the medieval church of St

Anastase closes at midday on the dot. There is a village shop, but no cafe, bar or restaurant. The deep silence is broken only by the chime of the church bell."

"Mr Blair walks to the shop to buy bread," M Boucher said. "Otherwise the family read and swim." M Boucher's son Nicolas, 15, posed for the cameras on his mountain bike, informing the world that the Blair children — Nicholas, Euan and Kathryn — speak some French, so that although he speaks no English, they play together. "They have not changed since they became the children of the British Prime Minister," he said.

Paul Esquivel, who runs the shop, said his phone had not stopped ringing since the news of the Blairs' imminent arrival broke. "We are suddenly off the map," he said. The château belongs to Sir



In tranquil Saint Martin d'Oydes the Prime Minister's summer visit is being hailed as the biggest thing since the Black Death, writes Richard Owen

David Keene, a High Court judge who is part of the Blairs' inner circle of legal friends, Sir David, according to the villagers, is "traveling in Africa" and is not expected back until September. Officials in Paris confirmed that Mr Blair would meet Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister — whose constituency is near by in Cintegabelle — next week.

The Blairs are in the second and final week of their holiday on the ten-acre estate of Geoffroy Robinson, the Paymaster General, in the Tuscan hills near San Gimignano,

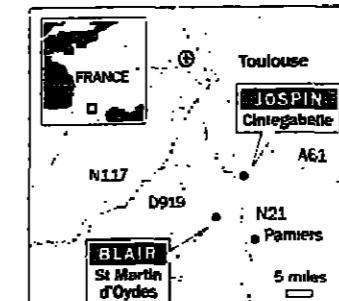
where they first went last summer. Clearly Mr Blair is drawn to the south — although the Ariège, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, is flatter and not as lush as Chianshire, with Tuscany's cypresses and olive groves giving way to dusty avenues of plane trees.

This is *La France Profonde*, with endless fields of wheat and sunflowers punctuated by buildings of red brick and roof tiles. The rambling three-storey Keene villa, which dominates the main village street, is built in the same local style, with a turret at either end. A

high wall fails to hide the house and 45-foot swimming pool. The area is popular with British, Dutch and German tourists.

"I would have thought there was a security problem here for the Prime Minister," said Bruce Anderson, a business consultant from Downe, Kent, who is renting the château at the moment with two other families. "The telephone engineers have been in to install extra lines, but we haven't seen any sign of the police or the security services yet."

Unlike in Tuscany, the French hideaway does not have a tennis court. But there is a games room in case of wet weather — the area was deluged this week — and a video and satellite television (the dish sprouts incongruously from one of the turrets). There are four bedrooms, including a children's dormitory, and a large farmhouse



kitchen with flagstones and a giant oak refectory table. The current tenants, who rented the house through an agency and are not personal friends of Sir David, were not told that Mr Blair and his family were arriving next.

"We heard about it from the cook," Mr Anderson said. "Our wives tossed a coin to decide which couple would have the master

bedroom. My wife won. As it happens she's called Pamela, and we're thinking of selling her story to the tabloids, along the lines of 'Pamela Anderson's torrid romps in Tony Blair's bed'."

There is also a library, well stocked with the latest biographies and novels. Guests are required to sign books out and return them, and several have Cherie Blair's signature in the flyleaf from previous visits.

"You need the library because there is nothing else to do here," said Graham Burrill, a retired insurance broker who is also staying at the château. "This village is like the *Mary Celeste*. It would be a big event when the traffic lights changed, except that there aren't any traffic lights. Tony Blair's visit is the biggest thing around here since the Black Death."

GRIGORY DUNOV / REUTER

Tobacco firms find new haven

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN WARSAW

Maribor Man may be riding into the sunset in the United States and Western Europe but here, in one of the last chain-smoking oases in the world, he is sitting high in the saddle.

Poland, the rest of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have become the growth area for tobacco companies such as Philip Morris, British-American Tobacco and R.J. Reynolds which are buying up factories and energetically marketing tobacco.

World Tobacco File, which monitors global smoking patterns, says that while cigarette sales dropped by 4.5 per cent in the US and Canada between 1990 and 1995, and by 1.7 per cent in Western Europe, they soared by 5.6 per cent in the post-Communist world.

There is, however, a fightback by fledgeling anti-smoking lobbyists who point to the very high incidence of cancer in Eastern Europe. Maribor Man and Joe Camel figure prominently on the billboards around Warsaw central station, but so do the health warnings.

According to a new anti-smoking law in Poland, the health warnings will have to cover 30 per cent of the cigarette packaging by the end of the year (compared to about 6 per cent in Western Europe) and 20 per cent of billboards. Poland, in other words, is trying to move quickly towards the US prohibition regime.

Smoking in institutions or public buildings has been banned and the campaigners want to push through a ban on smoking while driving.

But there is a big gap in Eastern Europe between the legislation and smoking practice. In Warsaw hospitals, patients gather in stairwells to puff; nurses and doctors rank among the most dedicated smokers. "Nobody enforces the ban," says Iwona Eysmont, a consultant who smokes a packet a day.

However, the key factor in the rise in smoking has been the scale of the involvement by tobacco companies. More than \$3 billion (£1.9 billion) has been spent by Western tobacco companies in the region over the past six years.

Ex-bodyguard wins fight to 'expose' Yeltsin

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin's former bodyguard yesterday claimed victory in a year-long battle with the Kremlin when he announced the publication of his memoirs that are likely to embarrass the Russian leader and many key figures in his administration.

Aleksandr Korzhakov, who for more than a decade was the Kremlin's leader's closest confidant before his sacking last year, said that the authorities had tried bribes and threats to block the book *Boris Yeltsin: From Dawn to Dusk*, which is out today. "I believe that the people should know the people who rule them," said the burly former KGB agent, who for five years was regarded as the second most powerful man in the Kremlin.

He also attacks Tatyana Dyachenko, Mr Yeltsin's daughter and adviser, who was instrumental in Mr Korzhakov's removal from power. Describing Mrs Dyachenko as a "bit of fluff", he alleges that she was duped into her role by scheming Kremlin couriers, in particular Anatoli Chubais, the deputy Prime Minister, and Boris Berezovsky, the billionaire and deputy head of the security council.

Mr Korzhakov claims that

putting it mildly. In page after page Mr Korzhakov describes his former employer as mentally unstable, and at times suicidal, an alcoholic who allowed Russia's key reform period to be hijacked by a corrupt bureaucracy and a criminal business class.

For the first time, the author sets out his plausible versions for bizarre events in 1994. He writes that Mr Yeltsin was unable to attend an official ceremony at Shannon airport because he had suffered a heart seizure or stroke on the flight over from America. He also gives a detailed account of the incident earlier that year in Germany when Mr Yeltsin seized the baton from the hand of a German military conductor and began to conduct the band at a ceremony for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Berlin.

He also attacks Tatyana Dyachenko, Mr Yeltsin's daughter and adviser, who was instrumental in Mr Korzhakov's removal from power. Describing Mrs Dyachenko as a "bit of fluff", he alleges that she was duped into her role by scheming Kremlin couriers, in particular Anatoli Chubais, the deputy Prime Minister, and Boris Berezovsky, the billionaire and deputy head of the security council.

Mr Korzhakov claims that

on one occasion Mr Korzhakov discussed murdering Yuri Luzhkov, the Mayor of Moscow, to prevent his presidential ambitions and also talked of killing the mayor's allies, media magnate Vladimir Gusinsky and the singer Iosif Kobzon.

He also takes a swipe at

Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, whom he alleges secretly collected 1,500,000 signatures ahead of last year's presidential elections, in case the Russian leader did not survive to polling day and the premier could put forward his candidacy instead.

The impact of Mr Korzhakov's book, which is due to have an initial print run of 150,000, is unlikely seriously to threaten the Russian leadership. Most of the events contained in the book occurred several years ago, and many of the allegations must be viewed with scepticism, since Mr Korzhakov was himself one of the most notorious figures to emerge from the Yeltsin Kremlin.

Nevertheless, senior Kremlin sources said yesterday that the book would not go unnoticed. "These two men were very good friends, and it still hurts the President to hear these allegations made by someone so close to him for so long."

Karadzic 'refused US aid to evade war crimes net'

FROM TOM WALKER
IN BANJA LUKA



she is bound by the Republika Srpska constitution, which prohibits extradition. With her own future so precarious, Richard Holbrooke, the American special envoy, did not mention the subject on his recent visit to Banja Luka. "I was really grateful," she said.

Mrs Plavšić's views on ethnic reintegration are coloured by her former career as biological professor at Sarajevo university.

"If rules in society are

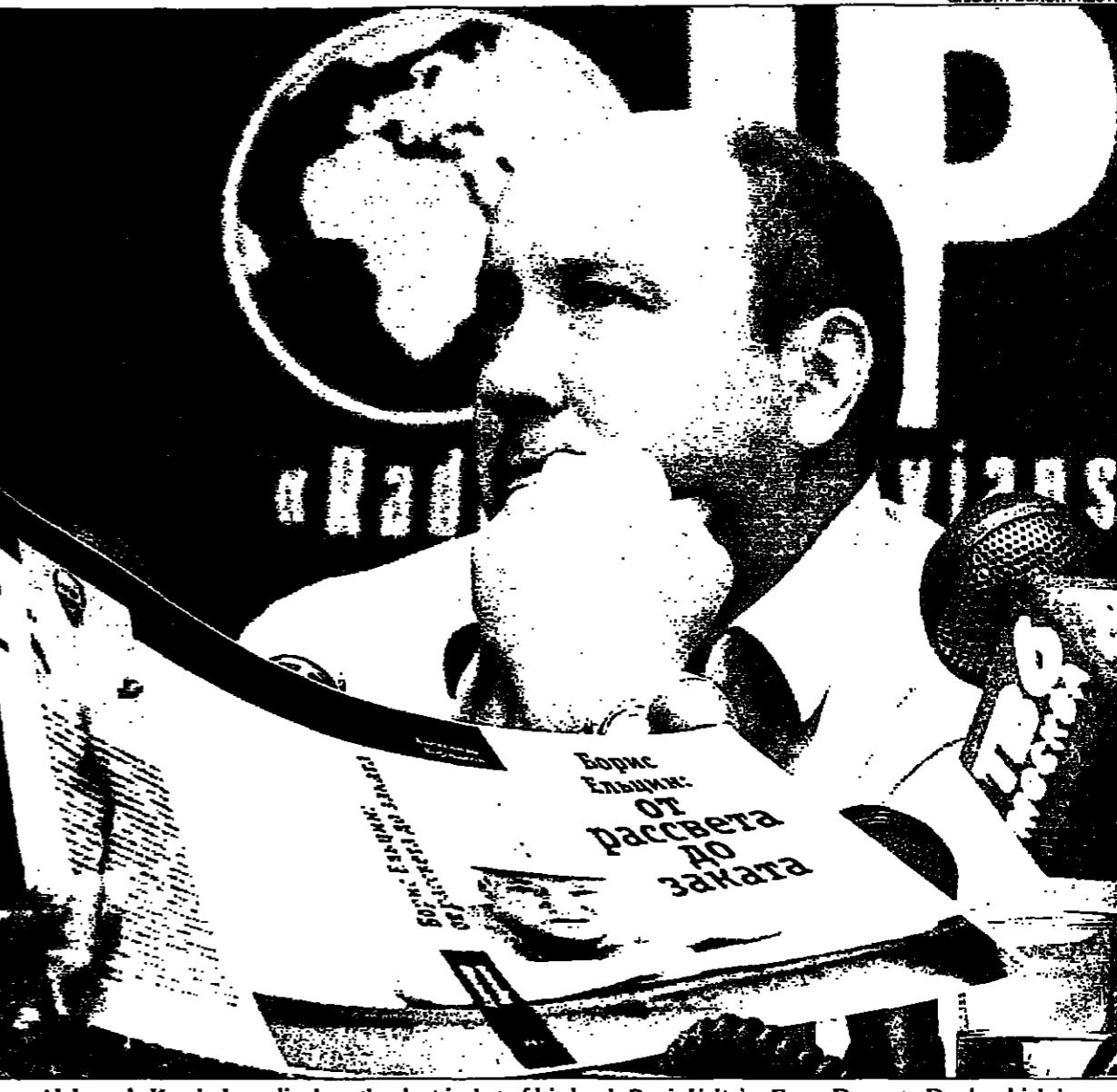
not well co-ordinated with biological rules then you have a small chance to function," she said.

"[Bosnian] Muslims are by origin Christians. They are not coming from Turkey or the Arabian countries. If you have leaders who want to be included in the Islamic world but the roots are somewhere else then you have the basis for confusion." An Orthodox cross glinted on her pink dress.

Despite these views, which earned her a reputation during the war as a champion of ethnic cleansing, Mrs Plavšić insists that tolerance remains possible in Republika Srpska. "It's going to be multi-ethnic in the way of England or Germany. Nobody thinks it is a territory only for the Serbs," she said.

One American diplomatic source in Bosnia said recently that he believed the Karadzic family had already been secretly moved to Russia. Dr Karadzic popped up again last week with an interview in a German newspaper, and for the moment he still controls Bosnia. "You are completely wrong. Serbs do not like going to the federation. Maybe they are going there to sell their property. I would say more Muslims like to come here than Serbs go to the

republic. She angrily rejected United Nations statistics which suggest Serb refugees are more likely to return to the Muslim-Croat Federation than Muslim refugees are to Republika Srpska. "You are completely wrong. Serbs do not like going to the federation. Maybe they are going there to sell their property. I would say more Muslims like to come here than Serbs go to the



Aleksandr Korzhakov, displays the dust jacket of his book *Boris Yeltsin: From Dawn to Dusk*, which is published today. The book portrays the Russian President as suicidal, unstable and an alcoholic

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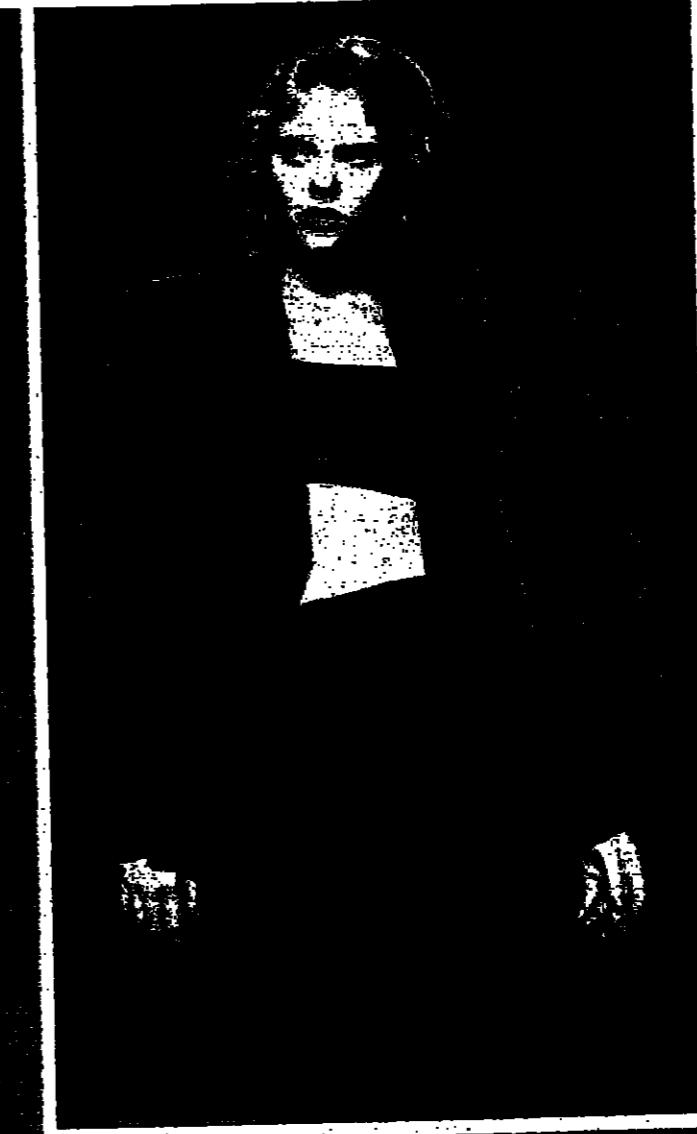
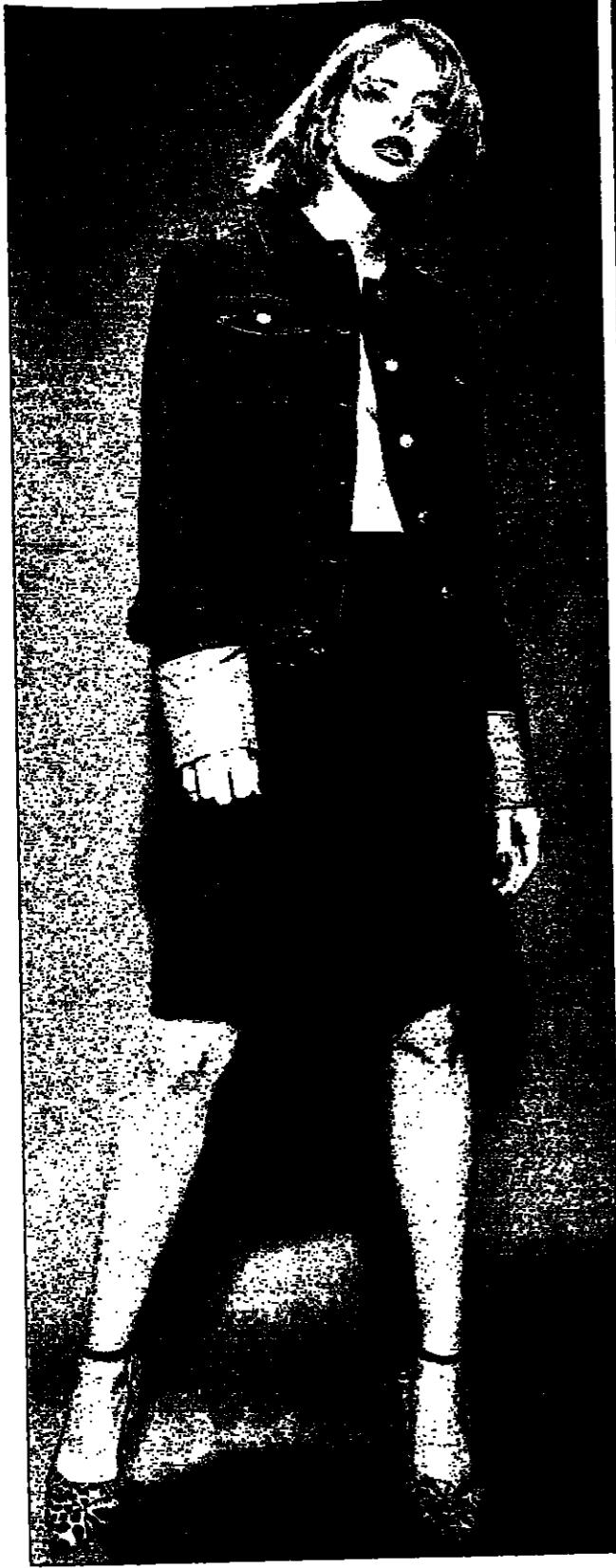
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The rebirth of the blues



LEFT: Indigo denim jacket with turn-up sleeves, £150, and matching skirt, £80, by Helmut Lang at Browns Focus, 38/39 South Molton Street, London W1. Animal-print ankle strap shoes, £250, by Insofta at Russell & Bromley, 24/25 New Bond Street, London W1. Earrings from a selection at Detail, 4a Symons Street, London SW1. ABOVE: Lace vest, £20, and denim skirt, £40, both by Warhouse. Red python court

shoes, £235 by Gina, 189 Sloane Street, London SW1. INSET: Indigo denim one-button jacket, £268 by Clements Ribeiro at Liberty, Regent Street, London W1. Denim A-line skirt, £24.99 and stretch leatherette buster, £24.99 both by Oasis, 232 Regent Street, London W1. Photographer: TIM WHITE. Stylist: Nicola Goldie. Hair: Matthew Wade at The Industry. Make-up: Daniel Sandler for Nars. Model: Charity at Select

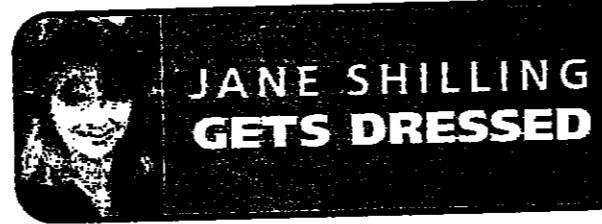
The ultimate issue of the ultimate magazine

OUT NOW

Tragic fall for the hot hipster

It hardly seems the moment, really, to be thinking about tweeds—in the middle of the dog days of August, that parched, enervating month when hardened radio presenters say to weather forecasters, as John Humphrys did this week, "This is hell. Tell us when it is going to stop."

Still, since yesterday, the feathered bodies have been thudding on to the grouse moors, and you may be sure that the guns were not clad in sweet-pea florals with lingerie straps. It may still be steamy in the city, but autumn is on its way, with a snap in the air in the mornings and the arrival in the shops of the winter collections.



JANE SHILLING
GETS DRESSED

For those of us in the town, the seasons are measured out in flirty skirts for spring, and power-shouldered autumn *tailleurs*. Right now, the shops look as bedraggled as a late-summer herbaceous border, all drooping linen and witting *crêpe de Chine* going grey from being fingered by eager sales shoppers. The sales, of course, bring their own little surge of excitement,

but I've done that, and now I'm ready for something new.

Impossible it may be in these temperatures to imagine actually walking about in double-knit heliotope chenille or smoke-grey cashmere suiting, there is still a *frisson* to be had from the sight of it hanging in crisp rows on the shop rails. There is something about the sugary reek of new fabric that affects fashion

victims in much the same way that the smell of cordite is supposed to affect old warhorses. And then there is that exhilarating feeling of On To The Next Thing.

In the fashion magazines, The Next Thing is delivered with a bracingly puritanical spin. Reading them is a chastening experience. Tatler's list of things I will be wanting to get rid of if I wish to retain any fashion credibility includes every single staple in my wardrobe.

The tiny little kitten heels are destined for the bin; so is the pencil skirt and cardigan uniform into which I gratefully fall on every working morning. I remain unmoved by the advice to put into mothballs the "black nylon Prada bag"—which in my case I have not got—but the really, really terrible news is that bootleg hipsters have also had it. I can't believe it.

After countless attempts to clear this particular fence, staring at myself in the fitting-room mirror and thinking "Oh no, I can't", I have finally bought myself a pair of bootleg hipsters. I haven't even worn them yet, and now I am told I must consign them to the attic until they come round again. At which point I shall no doubt be accessorising them with Gucci Zimmer-frame and Armani bifocals.

So what am I going to be wearing this winter? A stout tweed coat just like my grandmother used to wear, teamed, as she would probably not have thought of doing, with a leopard-print nightie, a little black leather skirt the size of a pocket handkerchief, and a matted, egg-yellow fur-trimmed, it is claimed, by Big Bird of *Sesame Street*. Oh no, you can't. Oh, but I can. Watch me.

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THE BROADCASTING STANDARDS COMMISSION

Complaint from Mrs Lavinia Greenbaum
—Summary of adjudication

On 24 April 1996 the BBC programme "Hearts of Gold" contained an item about Mrs Joan Brander and her role in the Winged Fellowship Trust. Mrs Greenbaum, who did not appear in the programme, complained to the Commission that the programme had been unfair and unfair to her as it failed to make it clear that she had been the founder of the Winged Fellowship voluntary organisation, which preceded the establishment of the Winged Fellowship Trust, a registered charity.

The Commission considers that some unfairness resulted from the programme-makers' failure to take sufficient account of information supplied by Mrs Greenbaum and of research material, which had included a brief but accurate account of Mrs Greenbaum's role in the early days of the Winged Fellowship as opposed to the Winged Fellowship Trust. As a result the programme failed to draw a sufficiently clear distinction between the Trust and the voluntary organisation which had preceded it. Despite the insertion of a commentary, intended to correct any misleading impression, the resulting statement was contradictory.

The Commission considers that viewers who did not have detailed knowledge of the two organisations would have wrongly supposed that the Winged Fellowship had been founded by Mrs Brander.

While the Commission accepts that the most substantial of the inaccuracies contained in the item were not of the BBC's making, it nonetheless considers that greater care could have been taken of the strong possibility that the impression in the item would have had the effect of expunging from the record the pioneering contributions of Mrs Greenbaum to the formation of the Winged Fellowship. While the Commission does not consider that the item was as damaging to the reputation of Mrs Greenbaum and her co-volunteers as it is conceivable for it to be, they find that there were some elements of unfairness in the item.

Accordingly, the complaint of unfair or unjust treatment is upheld. You may obtain a copy of the Commission's complete adjudication by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: The Broadcasting Standards Commission (377), The Treasury, London SW1P 3LS.

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'I have always got even. It's so therapeutic'

Philip Seldon always gains revenge — and shows others how. Barry Wigmore reports

When Philip Seldon was a small and skinny schoolboy, he was the child all the others picked on. A callow youth with buck teeth, in the playground he was bullied. In love, he was laughed at.

Philip started leaving embarrassing notes, forged in his adversaries' handwriting and signed with their names so the teacher would find them. Young Philip soon discovered what he believes to be an inarguable fact of life: revenge is sweet.

He moved on to more cunning ploys. As a teenager he would report, anonymously, foes who crossed him to the police for traffic violations, such as lights not working on their cars.

He knew the lights did not work because he had removed the bulbs.

Seldon has been getting even ever since. In fact he has made a mini-career of it. Now he lectures on the subject in the world's biggest battleground for getting even — New York. There is no shortage of willing disciples wishing to take evening classes and learn from his experiences.

From dumped spouses to angry mothers-in-law and sacked workers, they queue to attend his high altar of revenge. Some of them, and the lessons he teaches, can be seen on *Inside Story*, tonight on BBC1.

There is *vengeance*, which dredges up old grudges and memories of past wrongs. Like Lady Merton, who stretched the arms of her husband's 32 Savile Row suits,

life *Fatal Attraction*. There is Martha who was given ten minutes to clear her desk after 26 years in the same job.

And there is Donna who wants to get even with the man who created a "beautiful fantasy of a marriage" then walked out, leaving only a message on her answering machine. Donna has already burnt £10,000 in computer equipment belonging to her ex, and is eager to learn more tactics.

"I wouldn't advise anything destructive like that," cautions Seldon. "That might be illegal, although it could be argued that the computers were joint property. You must stay within the law." What he does advise can be seen on tonight's programme, he says. "But,"

he adds, "I have heard that my ploys work and people feel much better as a result."

Seldon, 56, masterminds his get-even classes from the Manhattan apartment which is also his office. He gives his lectures at local private colleges.

"I have always got even," he says. "It's so therapeutic. How else are you going to sleep at night when someone has hurt you? It's also really quite simple. You look for the weakness. Everybody has one. You plot and you move."

Getting even is not just an American disease, of course. There have been some spectacular acts of *vengeance* in Britain. Like Lady Merton, who stretched the arms of her husband's 32 Savile Row suits,



The important thing is not to think too small. Generally speaking, the grander the scheme, the more satisfying the result. No sting is too ambitious — especially if it works

poured six litres of white paint all over his BMW and distributed his 70 bottles of vintage wine to neighbourhood doorsteps. And Sandy Gall's wife, Eleanor, who dumped his golfclubs, suits and expensive wine outside his mistress' front door.

Seldon admires that ploy. "The important thing is not to think too small," he says. "Generally speaking, the grander the scheme, the more satisfying the result. No sting is too ambitious — especially when it works."

And he should know. In his other life, Seldon is a wise writer and publisher. At the height of public interest in men on the Moon and

the space programme, he remembers, a group of Nasa men approached him to write a book with them — the inside story of a moon shot.

One was a public relations officer with Nasa, the others said that they were scientists. What he did not know for some time was that they were all claiming to be considerably more important than they were. And they had signed the American equivalent of the Official Secrets Act, which said that no one could write a book without authority, and no individual could claim credit for it.

"Their bosses were swamped with calls and there was all hell to pay," he recounts with satisfaction. "No matter how much they denied

it no one believed that they had not sent out that release."

Then there was the time Seldon was sacked for no apparent reason. In an elaborate sting he hired a friend, a freelance writer who was already happy with the work he was doing, to apply for the vacancy. Having got the job, the friend messed things up in spectacular fashion before walking out.

"It needs to be a good friend with a real sense of humour," Seldon concedes. "But if you plan a scam well, the satisfaction is enormous."

The best revenge, he says, is when the victim knows that you are responsible but can do absolutely nothing about it. It causes your

adversary inconvenience, embarrassment and better still, money. "I find that, generally speaking, women are better at revenge than men," he says. "They have more patience and the anger bubbles much longer. Men tend to want to lash out. Women can be more devious."

Recently, Seldon has run into a little trouble with his get-even classes. The college where he lectured went into liquidation, and he has found obstacles in his way at others he has approached.

"I just wonder," he muses darkly. "If someone is getting even."

• *Inside Story: Dial V for Vengeance*, tonight on BBC1 at 10pm

Selfridges: not a store, but a temple, where spirituality can be found + Di and Dodi prove a kiss isn't naughty, but nice + Prof and prejudice + The spy who taught me

With the right platitude you can work miracles

It doesn't surprise me that new figures show department stores are relatively speaking, enjoying a boom. Having spent Sunday indulging in a spot of retail therapy in Selfridges (air conditioning, wonderful food hall and cookware department open on Sundays), I can attest to their healing powers.

In a mall, it is hard not to feel alienated, infantilised, as if sucked into a Fritz Lang film remake by Disney, as one is herded along over but sunless corridors like programmed-to-shop sheep. The department store, too, subdues, but it understands that in an age of consumerism, we want not villages, but temples: the department store is, as the scholar Peter

Gay established in *The Bourgeois Experience*, the cathedral of the modern age.

Now, the age about which Professor Gay, now at Yale, was writing might have been just as crassly materialistic as our own. But there are worse things to be than crassly materialistic. Indeed, it is when we try to show ourselves to be better — the clumsy pawing after "spirituality" — that we are at our most awful. The self-deceiving, self-congratulatory, woozy-minded platinising that marks the contemporary sensibility is a case in point. Openness, briskness, clarity, understanding: these are meant to represent the spirit of the age. They do not.

I have found what truly represents the spirit of the age

in the basement of Selfridges. It is a book: *Meditations For Women Who Do Too Much*. Everything about it screams: Now! The breathy indication of higher thought, of pseudo-philosophical musings, the portentous simplicity of its title, with its prayer-book intonation, the respectful separation of women into a special little huddle with a special, big sensibility, the martyred yet self-aggrandising assumption of saintly and supercharged busyness: this, exactly, is the state we're in.

Every up-to-the-minute cliché about what it is to be female, the distillation of every woman's page, has found its way into this book.

On my first journalistic assignment, I was sent to a festival of clairvoyants and palm readers. I listened to them ply their trades, and the way it worked soon became clear. Their opening gambit clothed itself as criticism — to show their sincerity, their desire to seem at all costs blunt and honest — but the reality of their words was to flatter, thereby ingratiating themselves on the punter, who, in turn, was narcissistically inclined to view that as tokens of their sincerity.

It went like this: "Oh, dear, I can see what your faults are. You do have a problem..." — and here an accusatory pause — "...you're just too hard on yourself. Give, give, give..." and so on in this vein.

Meditations For Women Who Do Too Much (I can't stop repeating this wonderful title) pulls the same trick. Each day's meditation is prefaced by a bonus platitude of

Nigella Lawson



its own. Thus, for March 19, we have from "Lynn": "We workaholics make so many promises that no human being could possibly keep them. That is one of the ways we keep ourselves feeling bad about ourselves."

How anyone could get so much self-pity and self-aggrandisement into one sentence is beyond me — but not beyond the sphere of this book. I can't help feeling that the women who read it may do not quite enough if they have time to ponder such issues as "Nothing I do is too tiny or too tedious to be spiritual"; or "To err is human, to forgive divine. To forgive myself and others is merely human."

In another entry, the author has the audacity to compare the discouragement a woman feels during the course of her

working life with the difficulties Anna Akhmatova, the Russian poet, wrote about.

"I have wished for a miracle, and I can be one," the author concludes one day. "Who is the person I call me?" she asks on another. "She has the potential of being one of the most interesting persons I have ever met. Yet I hardly know her."

It would be hard to find more concentration of self-absorption, New Age daffiness and almost parodic homespun philosophising if you tried. Women tied themselves to the barricades, threw themselves under the King's horse — and for this?

The homily for today, August 13, focuses on how much we seek to control ourselves, and ends with the uplifting thought: "No wonder we don't smile much!" You said it, lady.

Question of intelligence is not so black and white

PROFESSOR Richard Lynn, of Ulster University, says that whites are more intelligent than blacks because they had to think cleverer thoughts to find food in cold lands. Never mind that Professor Lynn's being both white and the progenitor of this eccentric theory would seem, by definition, to work against its proof.

Think, rather, that all theories of racial hierarchies of intelligence must maintain consistency in the anthropological long term.

And yet, this has not always been the case within such studies. Or what, then, could

explain the intellectual gains made by the immigrant group that routinely appeared at the bottom of the list when intelligence was measured at the turn of the century? The same group that the Bell Curve, the last hyped study of comparative racial attributes, showed was now at the top of the heap. For the Ashkenazi Jews to have made such extraordinary and "intelligent" leaps in the course of one century is bewildering: unless, of course, we take into account the crucial factor of the changing acceptability of any particular prejudice.

Diana, goddess of the chaste

What we do. The tabloids know that we live in a land squirming with lust, where every nod is just as good as a wink — and sometimes even better.

We know that we do this, because the tabloid press tells

WE live, we know, in a sexually degenerate land, a land where the old virtues of constancy, faithfulness and virginity have lost whatever currency they once had. We follow our leaders, hopping from lover to lover, from bed to bed, without a thought for what our actions mean.

We know that we do this, because the tabloid press tells

it no one believed that they had not sent out that release."

Then there was the time Seldon was sacked for no apparent reason.

In an elaborate sting he hired a friend, a freelance writer who was already happy with the work he was doing, to apply for the vacancy.

Having got the job, the friend messed things up in spectacular fashion before walking out.

"It needs to be a good friend with a real sense of humour," Seldon concedes.

"But if you plan a scam well, the satisfaction is enormous."

The best revenge, he says, is when the victim knows that you are responsible but can do absolutely nothing about it. It causes your

adversary inconvenience, embarrassment and better still, money. "I find that, generally speaking, women are better at revenge than men," he says. "They have more patience and the anger bubbles much longer. Men tend to want to lash out. Women can be more devious."

Recently, Seldon has run into a little trouble with his get-even classes. The college where he lectured went into liquidation, and he has found obstacles in his way at others he has approached.

"I just wonder," he muses darkly.

"If someone is getting even."

• *Inside Story: Dial V for Vengeance*, tonight on BBC1 at 10pm

discover that, in the midst of all of this writhing, those same tabloids are able to write that a single photographed kiss from a princess is not a signal of mere sexual attraction, but of true romance and what is more, certain-to-lead to the altar. So decent, these tabloid commentators, able to retain such purity of thought in this wicked, wicked world.

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It's odd, then, isn't it, to

Alan Coren



■ Battered fish, chip shots and carpalid mania at the water hazard

Someone very dear to me has just been killed by a golf ball. I am still in shock. I was the one who discovered the corpse. I discovered it soon after I discovered the golf ball, because it was the golf ball which first came to my notice, being more noticeable than the corpse beside which it was floating. Since a shrewd guess will now be forming in your imagination, I suppose I should confess that, when I say very dear to me, I exaggerate somewhat: you cannot call two quid dear, even though it would probably be a fiver by now: the body is a lot bigger than it was six years ago when I carried it home with nine others in a plastic bag from Hendon Fishworld, in addition to which goldfish prices have doubtless shot up along with everything else. But anyway, dear or not, we have shared the same garden since 1991, it in the pond. I on the rim, and have grown as close to one another as those circumstances and our differing species permit, and while I may agree that it had been the fish who discovered me in the pond, dead of a golf ball, it might not have gone into shock. I cannot accept that the loss of a close fish is in any way mitigated by the possibility that the affection was unrequited. Especially when the loss is exacerbated by its nature.

Someone killed the fish. Not in self-defence — I rather doubt that the fish leapt from the pond and set about a passing golfer, forcing him to protect himself from the first weapon that came to hand — but either deliberately or unwittingly, and I want the culprit nailed. For myself I want it to be myself. I am not walking into my local nick with a dented goldfish and a Dunlop 65 and demanding to see the Chief Inspector of the Serious Fish Squad; I am pretty certain that it cannot be the former: were some kind of crackpot stalking Cricklewood's sporadic wetlands and hurling golf balls at their fauna, I think I should have heard. I believe it to be another kind of crackpot, a conviction sustained, furthermore, by two other telling pieces of evidence, one in the guttering of my garden shed and one at the foot of my acacia: along with the carpalid Exhibit A, they would seem to constitute incontrovertible proof that, out there beyond my back wall, some madman is playing golf.

The question is, if I am going to stand any chance of nailing him, how far beyond? Did he, that is, tee off with a driver to reach my premises from a couple of hundred yards away, or take only, say, a Number 8 iron from half that distance? Or might it have been no more than a sand-wedge, chipping into my pond from another garden, a mere street away? Did he stand there, bunkered perhaps in a neighbour's sandpit or stymied behind a plastic elf, and did he finally swing, ready to cheer his deft escape, only to see the arcing ball plummet into the notorious hazard known throughout golddom as Coren's Pond? And what about Coren's Gutter and Coren's Tree? Was that him on two earlier rounds? Or does he play with a couple of equally inept madmen? Might they, indeed, be a foursome, one of them either too incompetent to clear my wall, or competent enough to clear my house? Where, if the latter, did this one go after that? Is the green somewhere across the road, beyond my frontage? I know only that my garden isn't the green, I have looked for a hole in my lawn, but though there are, of course, several, there is none that seems large enough. Certainly none with a flag in it.

You see, do you not, where deduction ends yet nailing fails to start? Since I do not know where in the nonional fairway my garden lies, I have no idea where this swine, these swines, is/are shooting from. I do not know when they do it, I have heard no one, I have seen no one, and may never do either, especially as their balls have been left where they lay, suggesting, perhaps, that my garden was never the target at all, merely the victim of three wild slices at the dog-leg fourth up the road.

Then again, I suppose it's always on the cards that they heard the unmistakable noise of guna-percha meeting goldfish, twiggled that a major crime had been committed, and slunk away like the poltroons they are. I hope so. I hope they have been put off their stroke for good. There are nine more dear ones in the pond, and they have had enough of golf.

Tim Hames reports on the feuding that could see the fall of America's most powerful political dynasty

Is this the end of the line for the Kennedys?

Solidarity, Joseph Kennedy always told his sons, would be the source of their salvation. Until now that dictum has been respected by the entire Kennedy dynasty. Through tragedy and scandal, the clan stuck together and retained its political influence. This makes it even more astonishing that John Kennedy Jr, the son of the slain President, has broken ranks and assailed two cousins for their private failings. His attack on Michael Kennedy, the son of Robert Kennedy, for his apparent affair with a teenage babysitter, will have little lasting importance. His assault on Michael's elder brother, Joseph Kennedy II, is far more consequential and will be deemed treachery within the family.

Joseph Kennedy II's electoral fate is critical to the continued power of the Kennedys. After ten years in Congress, serving a district that once sent John F. Kennedy to the House of Representatives, he intends to become Governor of Massachusetts. If he is elected, to the only position of consequence within the state that a Kennedy has never held, then he will become a figure of real importance within the Democratic Party. If not, he is finished. The family's hold on Massachusetts affairs — a Kennedy has held office there for every year but two in the past half-century — will end when Edward Kennedy eventually retires from the Senate.

Unfortunately, Congressman Kennedy is not the ideal figure to lead either his family or Massachusetts into the next millennium. He seems to lack the intelligence, oratorical skills, or personal charm of his father. His record during a decade in Washington has been widely viewed as dismal. His major "interventions" of note have been in foreign policy — essentially, Northern Ireland — where his ceaseless promotion of the IRA's cause has doubtless pleased his partisan constituents, but has otherwise been an embarrassment. He also dumped his first wife, Sheila. She promptly savaged him in print for having pressed her into an annulment. It was the Congressman's inept attempt at a public apology that prompted John Kennedy Jr's condemnation.

Nevertheless, the entire might of the Kennedy machine will be deployed to make Joseph Kennedy II the Governor. Too much is on the line to permit trivial issues — such as a transparent lack of relevant qualifications — to enter electoral calculations. All the traditional weapons in the Kennedy arsenal will be deployed in the quest for, first, the Democratic Party nomination ten months hence; and then the final contest in November next year. The Congressman will vastly outspend any other candidate. His television commercials will shamelessly exploit public sympathy for his assassinated predecessors. The clan will also use its powers of persuasion to prevent other potential contenders from entering the race.

The early signs are that the strategy might be depressingly successful. Joseph Kennedy has already made it clear that he will spend more than \$10 million in the quest for office. Several alternative candidates from within the Massachusetts Democratic ranks have decided that they simply cannot compete at that level. Only one figure of real rank, State Attorney-General Scott Harshbarger, is inclined to make the race — but he has already found past financial contributors unwilling to commit themselves in a

state in which he barely met the residency requirements.

But even this audacity was outstripped by the methods used to elevate Edward Kennedy to the Senate. When Jack Kennedy won the White House, his Massachusetts Senate seat fell vacant. Bobby Kennedy's selection as Attorney-General removed the obvious successor from contention; that left Ted as the sole remaining brother.

Unfortunately, Ted was then 28 years old and the American Constitution stipulates that senators cannot be younger than 30. An almost unknown figure named Ben Smith, Jack Kennedy's Harvard University room-mate, a man of no prior or subsequent electoral experience, became a senator for two years and then retired into obscurity once Ted Kennedy became available.

It remains to be seen whether the tricks and techniques of the past can still deliver the citizens of Massachusetts. If the family can elect Joseph Kennedy II to the Governor's mansion, then the clan can survive into the next century. If the electorate votes its candidate down, then an extraordinary era will have drawn to an end. It would be ironic if that process of political decline was assisted by the son of the only Kennedy to have attained the highest office that the United States has to offer.

Honour among vulgarians

The true purpose of the press is to make the complex simple and to grab the reader's eye. But it neglects this in its welter of synthetic rage over Mandelson and its tasteless hounding of the Princess

As a young reporter I once sent a reckless missive to my editor. That day's front page had somehow upset me and I pomposly suggested that it was rather vulgar. The great man's riposte was swift. "Kindly remember. A newspaper is rather vulgar."

Every August revives that memory. I enter a newsagent's shop at present and the shelves blast me with a fusillade of tabloid intrusion and synthetic broadsheet rage. From Diana, Princess of Wales, to the machinations of Peter Mandelson, the media has spent the week in "search and destroy" mode. Reporters fan out, the hunter-gatherers of the service sector feeding their ravenous circulation managers. A gazelle limps from the herd and the pack descends and gnaws its flank.

I had thought that Diana was on a mildly honourable mission to bring cheer to landmine victims in Bosnia. Every public figure has an ulterior motive where publicity is at stake, but she could have stayed at the Fayed Ritz or on the Fayed yacht. Nobody made her go to Bosnia. I am sure the children with whom she was pictured were glad she went. Landmines are the most pestilential of arms manufacturers. The Princess's publicity for their abolition is a worthy cause.

Yet these are the reflections of an unprofessional wimp. I am supposed to shriek across the Bosnian countryside: "What's it like to be in love again?", or, "How's Dodie?" If I so much as called: "What is your view, madam, of Article 8 of the European convention on privacy rights?" I would soon have been Harold Lloyd after a stampede, flat in the dust with my hat round my ears. Today's journalist is a Rambo with a Nikon 300mm lens at his hip. He hides for days in the maquis, waiting for the embrace that is worth a million. He questions the famous *not in the hope of articulate reply but for a sharp camera angle*. Pictures are doctored, quotes fabricated, spoilers invented.

The pictures of the Princess on the Fayed yacht were an intrusion on her privacy and in breach of all professional codes of conduct. In a better world all involved would be brought before a self-regulatory tribunal. But we jest. We might as well sue the Ganges for flooding. The whole world wants to see those grainy smudges. Nobody cares about the ethics. In this week's *Spectator*, Alan Clark wonders whether the British press wants to drive public figures to suicide. I think not. Journalists do not kill, but as the poet says, they "do not strive sufficiently to live".

For all the ministerial talk about Fleet Street drinking in the Last Chance Saloon, the photographers on the Diana story are as likely to read a manual on press ethics as they are Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.

Which brings me to victim number two, Mr Mandelson. Like the Princess, he can defend himself. In the long run I



am not so sure about the press. Mr Mandelson's job is to co-ordinate the presentation of government policy. He wants to put it in the best possible light. With his colleague, Alastair Campbell, he has pioneered a new technique of media relations that involves treating journalists not with the obsessive timidity of a John Major but with open contempt. They have discovered that most journalists, if sufficiently insulted, capitulate, especially if they work for the BBC.

Mr Mandelson goes walking with the BBC boss, John Birt. No BBC journalist can tell what passes between them, so why risk upsetting the easily upset Minister without Portfolio? This is not spin-doctoring, but spin-neurourgery.

The technique is well-documented in Nicholas Jones's excellent *Soundbites* and *Spindictors*.

Mr Mandelson is doing the oldest job in British politics and doing it well. He is putting across the boss's case. Until last May the political media was waiting for that the poor Tories had no Mandelson". Mr Major had nobody

with sufficient authority to knock heads together and make sure ministers did not shoot each other in the foot. The new Tory leader, William Hague, has even set out to "find a Tony Mandelson". For the Tories to protest that Mr Mandelson is too effective is hypocritical. They are jealous.

That is understandable. For the press to make the same complaint against Mr Mandelson is ludicrous. For the past week he has been portrayed as a near-criminal manipulator. To limit the damage of Robin Cook's separation from his wife, he leaked news of an inquiry into a possible security lapse by Chris Patten. His apparatus leaked

pseudo-news about the Royal Yacht. Nor was this all. Mr Mandelson kept popping up on radio and television to put Tony Blair's first 100 days in a good light. To crown the indignity, when a BBC reporter asked him pert questions, he was more than pert back. He was rude. The media's entire August shift burst into collective tears of indignation.

Mr Mandelson may not have been wise to court so much personal publicity this past week. As every bowler knows, the best spin is concealed. But the media has made an ass of itself. Since the days of Harold Wilson, Downing Street has drifed the lobby with daily news, views and title-tattle. On the old *Evening Standard*, a call came each morning from Trevor Lloyd-Hughes with the Prime Minister's spin on the day's events, hoping to influence the lunchtime edition. The key to such spin is the close relationship between impresario and chief. Sir Bernard Ingham had that relationship with Margaret Thatcher, so does Mr Mandelson with Mr Blair. It is immaterial whether the impresario is an official or a minister.

I like the concept of a vulgar press. Journalists should always battle to make the complex simple and to grab the reader's eye with novelty. Otherwise British newspapers will go the way of most American ones. They will be dull, and read only by an elite. But there must be honour even among vulgarians. Defining the limits of vulgarity is a job best done by the media itself. If it refuses, the limits will be fixed by others, and they will be tight.

Simon Jenkins

and journalist Hunter Davies. Wearing a Martin Bell-style white suit, Davies agreed to interview Forster before a packed marquee. This was no gentle bicker over the marmalade. Mrs Davies squashed her husband's theories about her literary output, accused him of never reading her books, of understanding fiction at all, and rebuked him for over-enjoying such public occasions as the festival and the craven admiration of fans.

"You're like Mr Toad. You're in floods of tears if people aren't charmed by you," Ms Forster told

Role call

AT the age of 94, Sir John Gielgud has one more grand acting part in mind. He wants to play Sir George Sitwell, the eccentric father of Edith and Osbert Sitwell, friends of the youthful Gielgud. Sir John declared his ambition when he sat recently for a portrait by John Stanton Ward, who will hang in the Queen's private gallery of members of the Order of Merit. Gielgud was awarded the OM earlier this year.

"I spent two mornings with

him," said Ward, who is 80, from his home near Ashford in Kent. "but it would have been marvellous if it had been a hundred. I was having a left-handed conversation while my right was drawing. His enunciation was wonderful, but as I am deaf I had to concentrate like mad."

After my report yesterday concerning the failure of Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, to renew his car tax, his car has disappeared from the street outside his house, to the safety, one hopes, of off-street parking space. Only five more days till the clamps take hold, minister.

In the cold

SHOWING a touching concern for the egos of others, Mel Gibson, the gormless Australian film star, was in London on Monday night for the premiere of his latest film, *Conspiracy Theory*. As the entertainment

press gathered to bawl questions to the stars, a rather frazzled publicist pleaded with the assembled press corps not to ignore the film's director, Richard Donner.

"I know Mel's the draw card, but for purely political reasons, do you think you could direct a few token questions to Richard as well?" she asked. "It would make Mel happy too."

It was to no effect. Donner stood fidgeting as all screens, lenses and thrusting microphones were directed firmly at Gibson.

P.H.S.

United we stand

SALVATION is at hand for Sir Desmond Pitcher, the pillarised chairman of United Utilities, in the improbable form of the Duke of Edinburgh. Pitcher clung onto his job at United at an emergency shareholders' meeting yesterday, despite having seen off two chief executives and being publicly ridiculed as the fatest of the fat cats. Now, he has been lined up to take over as head of the World Fellowship of Donors to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards inter-

national scheme, in the new year. Pitcher has somehow managed to time the news of his colossal bonus payments to coincide with a mass wail of complaints from those who use his water supplies. An immodest man, with tastes in gold watch-chains and light-brown overcoats, he makes a strange bedfellow for the Duke. Nonetheless, last November, as Pitcher found himself bullet-dodging over the scale of his bonuses, the Duke stepped up to the plate by

going to open the North West Water centre in Warrington for him. Pitcher is a curious choice for reasons besides his poor dress sense. His stewardship of the Merseyside Development Corporation was not a great success. Furthermore, he has been severely criticised at United for his parochial outlook and reluctance to look abroad to expand, as his European rivals have done. Not ideal qualifications, one would have thought, for one about to head an international fundraising body.

Home truths

THE main attraction at the Edinburgh Literary Festival yesterday was a public row between Margaret Forster, the novelist and biographer, and her husband, the writer

and journalist Hunter Davies. Wearing a Martin Bell-style white suit, Davies agreed to interview Forster before a packed marquee. This was no gentle bicker over the marmalade. Mrs Davies squashed her husband's theories about her literary output, accused him of never reading her books, of understanding fiction at all, and rebuked him for over-enjoying such public occasions as the festival and the craven admiration of fans.

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Desmond Pitcher and the Duke of Edinburgh, his new boss

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P.H.S.



ABOVE SUSPICION

Peers should declare their financial interests

The long arm of the Committee on Standards in Public Life is now poised to extend into the House of Lords. Having illuminated the darkest corners of the House of Commons, then created a rigorous regulatory framework for MPs, Lord Nolan has devoted some of the summer recess to contemplating a similar review of standards in the Lords. He himself is eager to return to his career as a law lord, but his successor will find the Committee eager to turn its attention to the Other Place. One of its members, Lord Shore of Stepney, has already given notice that he expects peers to abide by the new obligation on MPs to declare their financial interests.

Yet it seems that many members of the Lords would disagree. Some two hundred active peers have refused or omitted to declare their interests in the latest register. Their reasons for declining what has hitherto been largely a voluntary disclosure no doubt vary greatly. In the past, it has been left to the discretion of peers to decide whether an interest might "affect the public perception of the way in which they discharge their parliamentary duties", and ought therefore to be made public. Baroness Thatcher, for example, may well believe that she has earned the trust of her peers; as she has long since ceased to hold political office, no vital public interest is damaged by her decision to exercise discretion.

Lord Parkinson's case is, however, quite different. By accepting the senior post of Chairman of the Conservative Party, he assumed certain obligations. The fact that he is in Opposition does not alter the fact that he wields power and patronage. Such a figure must be seen to be above suspicion. Not that he has any reason to fear transparency; his ten directorships are no secret. The boards on which he sits value his actual experience, not his potential influence. Declaring these directorships in the Lords' register was a mere formality, but one which

the Conservative Chairman would have been wiser to regard as his duty. His failure to do so has blunted his attack on Lord Simon of Highbury's similar oversight.

Lord Parkinson's omission is all the odder given that several of his former colleagues have declared their interests. Indeed, the multifarious skills and accumulated wisdom of the peers are the principal glory of their House. As the Commons becomes an ever more narrowly oligarchical body of professional politicians, the Lords' role as a scrutinising chamber positively requires them to retain a generous mixture of intelligent generalists and specialists from other walks of life. The more peers have outside interests, the more useful public servants they may be — provided they are frank about them.

For the Lords to pre-empt Lord Nolan and his committee may also be a matter of institutional survival. Though the Upper House has sometimes anticipated the Lower — notably in broadcasting debates — its palpable lack of transparency now seems anachronistic. True, the Other Place has seen little lobbying and no scandals; but this does not justify complacency. The election of a Labour Government, able to steamroller a constitutional revolution through the Commons, should scotch the argument that the Lords does not matter: it may yet become the real opposition.

Atteas called the Lords "a glass of champagne that has stood for five days". The taxpayer will no longer pay for the best club in town. If the House of Lords is to preserve its distinctive character, while performing its proper function as a revising chamber, then it needs to show the Nolan committee that it can reform itself. Peers are legislators, and they should adhere to the same standards, including disclosure of interests, as MPs. To reformulate Acton: all power tends to corrupt, and absolute openness is the only antidote.

OPAQUE IRAN

The new President may be powerless to effect real change

The composition of the Cabinet nominated yesterday by Mohammad Khatami, the new Iranian President, is disappointingly cautious. Those disappointed will include not only policymakers in the West, whose eagerness to identify Iranian "moderates" has led them into embarrassing miscalculations in the past, but the millions of Iranians who cheered last May's sweeping election victory of this mild-mannered cleric as a merited popular rebuke to the diehard cabals that run Iran's theocracy.

In Iran's medieval power structure, the shape of the Government is only one part of an equation which is impossible to calculate accurately because so much real power is wielded by unaccountable bodies such as the Council of Guardians and shadowy religious foundations. They answer to Iran's omnipotent spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who sets the broad domestic agenda, controls key appointments to the judiciary, armed forces and media and dominates foreign and defence policy.

But this Cabinet was Mr Khatami's first opportunity to show how serious he is about reforms. The emphasis on technocrats for the key domestic ministries will not be enough to impress Iranians: the outgoing President, Hashemi Rafsanjani, also had his "California mafia". The few identifiably liberal appointments in social portfolios will not make up for his failure to appoint a single female minister. Yet it would be premature to conclude that Iranians who long for more competent and tolerant government, and who believed his campaign promises to improve respect for the rule of law, champion women's rights, work for more social justice and allow greater latitude in private life, were wrong to vote for him.

The President has to submit his list to the Iranian Majlis. Its Speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, was spectacularly defeated in

the presidential race despite — or because of — being championed by Ayatollah Khamenei. The President must sense the knives at his back. An equally plausible explanation for this uninspiring debut, therefore, is that he dares not risk early public humiliation at the hands of the hidebound conservative mullahs who dominate the Majlis.

He has reason to take his opponents seriously. They have already engineered the arrest, since the elections, of prominent liberals identified with him. But what such caution does indicate is that any easing of the repressive shackles of arbitrary power, exercised since the 1979 revolution in the name of religious dogma, will be both slow and all but invisible, even to Iranians.

At his inauguration ceremony, Mr Khatami held out at least half an olive branch to the outside world. He spoke of the importance of "dialogue between civilisations" and "detente" in Iran's foreign relations, and promised to "avoid any action or behaviour causing tension". In this, he speaks for the many Iranians who chafe at the inglorious isolation imposed on them.

These words are worth weighing, but in scales loaded with scepticism. There is no evidence that Iran has stopped bankrolling Islamic terror. The fatwa against Salman Rushdie, an outrageous affront to international law, still stands. Iran may be close to developing nuclear weapons and has, notably, yet to sign the protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that would permit effective inspections. In America, critics who contend that containment of Iran has failed can draw no cheer from the dismal collapse of Europe's efforts at "constructive dialogue". It is just possible that Mr Khatami is the interlocutor the world has been looking for since 1979, but Iran has too many scores against it for the West to be prodigal with carrots just yet.

EVIL EMPIRE

The Good, the Bad, and the British

A decent villain is hard to find nowadays. For more than 40 years the Cold War supplied Hollywood with an inexhaustible farrago of baddies. Communists and spies. But when the Berlin Wall came down, action movies lost more than just an evil empire: they lost all their Russian anti-heroes.

The Chinese still spouting communist ideology, could perhaps stand in: but they were too inscrutable. The Germans were passe, apart from a lingering trace of the old Nazi in *Die Todesfahrt*. Sicilian Mafiosi had a brief, Oscar-winning run, but fell foul of the powerful Italian American lobby. Middle Eastern villains were promising but when Arab Americans went to court to file defamation suits over *The Crimson Jihad*, studio lawyers whispered into the ears of film moguls and the next few sequels were all cancelled. And so the movie-makers returned, after a deeply felt absence, to their favourite villains: the British.

A letter to *The New York Times* noted sardonically, whether it is history (*Michael Collins, Braveheart*), drama (*The Silence of the Lambs*), thriller (*The Devil's Own*) or children's animation (*The Lion King*), the men with the sinister leers and evil plans have all been British or had English accents. So imprinted is the stereotype that Britons have portrayed even American baddies (*Ant-*

hony Hopkins in Nixon) while British heroes such as Robin Hood or James Bond have been usurped by Americans or Irishmen.

This is splendid news. It continues a long tradition that gave such cut-glass British stars as Trevor Howard (*Mutiny on the Bounty*) and George Sanders (*Rebecca*) continuous employment. It has paved the way for Gary Oldman, Alan Rickman and Charles Dance to sneer, plot and double-cross their way across the screen. Even the children are again being brought up on horrible Brits. Who can forget Disney's serpentine, insinuating Sir Hiss, the only one in the Sheriff of Nottingham's entourage who had a Terry-Thomas English accent?

What, to British ears, is extraordinary is that every villain has an elegant, rounded vowels. It probably all goes back to 1776, when the heroic but simple American soul confronted King George's privileged officer class and won. There is something about British English that to American ears implies social grace, effortless superiority and high culture far above anything found in Connecticut or Kansas. How satisfying, therefore, to know that it is all a facade, that the Briton on screen is hypocrisy incarnate, a traitor and a coward. Of course he will know which fork to use at dinner. But is that not the ultimate intimidation?

Richard Harris, 5 Clovelly Park, Hindhead, Surrey. richardh@btv.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Role of the CPS in high-profile trials

From His Honour Judge Morell

Sir, You report today that the acquittal of three footballers and a businessman of conspiring to fix Premier League matches is "yet another blow to the beleaguered Director of Public Prosecutions, Dame Barbara Mills, QC".

This view of the role of the Crown Prosecution Service, which has been reflected in press comment on the results of other high-profile trials recently, such as Maxwell, is misconceived, unfair and dangerous.

The duty of the CPS is enshrined in the Code for Crown Prosecutors: in cases where it judges the chances of a conviction as better than evens and a prosecution to be in the public interest, it must lay the facts before the court fairly and impartially. The duty of the advocate who prosecutes is to act as a minister of justice and not to strive officiously for a conviction.

Within such a framework, it is inevitable that a proportion of prosecutions result in acquittals: in 1996-97, 40 per cent in the Crown Court and 25 per cent in the magistrates' courts. To stigmatise these acquittals as "blows" or "defeats" for the CPS and its director implies that it should be enough for a conviction that it or she has decided to prosecute. In such an attitude lies the seed of tyranny.

Yours faithfully,

PETER R. MORRELL,
Judges Chambers,
Crown and County Court,
Crown Buildings, Rivergate,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
August 8.

From Mr Colin Slinn

Sir, The decision by Mr Justice McCullough not to allow the costs of the defendants acquitted in the match-fixing case (reports and leading article, August 9) would appear somewhat perverse.

It is true — as you quote Geoffrey Robertson, QC, as stating — that the trial judge has a discretion in relation to costs; however, this was a second trial for the accused. The jury in the first trial failed to reach a verdict and were discharged; it was then up to the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether or not to put the same evidence to another jury in a new trial.

Having heard the defence evidence the prosecution still went ahead, presumably in the public interest, with the second trial, thus incurring further substantial sums of public money. Surely the costs of this second trial, which could have been avoided if the prosecution had so wished, should not be paid by those acquitted. This would seem to put a high price on justice.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN SLINN,
29 Bridge Park
Rothesay, Bute, Strathclyde.
August 11.

Proper process of law

From Sir Anthony Grant

Sir, What business is it of the Prime Minister to order an investigation into the death of a Labour MP (report, August 4)?

The tragic death of Gordon McMaster, or anyone else in similar sad circumstances, is a matter for a fatal accident inquiry, should the local Procurator Fiscal's office call one, and were discharged; it was then up to the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether or not to put the same evidence to another jury in a new trial.

With great respect to the Roads Minister, Baroness Hayman (report, August 6), the "hard core of offenders who are way over the [present] limit" are unlikely to stop drinking and driving because the lawful blood/alcohol limit is reduced to 50mg, the equivalent of one pint of beer — a proposal I do not remember seeing in Labour's general election manifesto.

They might stop if there were mandatory imprisonment for driving "way over the limit". Such imprisonment could be at weekends for those in employment.

I suggest a minimum of one week, or two weekends, for a first offender with 150mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood, with increments of three days

for each subsequent offence.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY GRANT
(Conservative MP for
Cambridgeshire South West, 1983-97)
32 Beaufort Place,
Thompson's Lane, Cambridge.
August 5.

Computers for Africa

From Mr Richard Harris

Sir, May I take issue with two points in your report on the demonstration in Botswana by the inventor, Trevor Bayliss, of the Apple E Mate handheld laptop computer powered by clockwork (details, later editions, July 30)?

You say the computer crashed after 16 minutes. I wasn't there, but as a rule when this type of computer runs out of its main battery it simply sleeps until it gets more power and, unlike a normal laptop, you don't lose whatever you are currently working on.

Also, you say that this laptop costs about £2,000. The E Mate is not yet generally available in Britain, but can be bought in the United States for US\$600-\$700 (approximately £400). It was designed for the US education market, but its simplicity and ruggedness make it potentially ideal for the developing world. At £400 rather than £2,000, it becomes a much more realistic proposition.

I'm not an employee of Apple, just a long-time user and analyst of mobile computing, currently evaluating the Apple E Mate for use in African conservation projects — it looks ideal.

Regards,

RICHARD HARRIS,
5 Clovelly Park,
Hindhead, Surrey.
richardh@btv.com

August 4.

Mystery of the C.S. Lewis wardrobe

From Mr Christopher Whiteside

Sir, When the celestial copies of some of your recent issues arrived (Diary, July 28; letters, July 31 and August 4) I suspect Heaven's arches rang with the sound of C. S. Lewis roaring with laughter.

Those of your correspondents who have attempted to derive allegorical meanings, or explain the origin of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, should bear in mind the comments in Lewis's Christian writings, to the effect that everyone who tried to reconstruct the genesis of his books got it wrong.

Lewis used as an argument against liberal theologians who proposed allegorical interpretations of the Bible the contention that reviewers who employed similar techniques on the books published by himself and his friends (such as J. R. R. Tolkien) had "a record of one hundred per cent failure" (*Fern Seed and Elephants*, Collins, 1975).

As he wrote to the *TLS* (November 28, 1958), much speculation in the study of literature "seems solid only because those who know the facts are dead and can't contradict it".

Create-a-theory scholarship is fun for those with Freudian inclinations; but we should spare even Liam Gallagher, who has revealed to your diarist that *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is his "favourite book".

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS WHITESIDE,
41 Queens Crescent,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.
August 4.

From Mr Jonathan Brewer

Sir, C. S. Lewis is reputed to have said that he got the idea for the wardrobe from the Victorian writer, George MacDonald (1824-1905).

Most people remember MacDonald for his children's fantasies, of which *The Princess and the Goblin* is best known: not so many realise that he wrote two excellent fantasy books for adults, *Phantastes* (1858) and *Lillith* (1895). I have an edition of *Lillith* with an introduction by Lewis.

Lillith contains a cupboard. When the owner enters it, and then leaves it again, he's somewhere else.

Womb indeed!

Yours sincerely,

ANDREW P. CUNEO,
President,
Oxford C. S. Lewis Society,
Merton College, Oxford.
August 1.

From Mr Paul Barnetson

Sir, C. S. Lewis is reputed to have said that he got the idea for the wardrobe from the Victorian writer, George MacDonald (1824-1905).

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Lillith contains a cupboard. When the owner enters it, and then leaves it again, he's somewhere else.

Womb indeed!

Yours sincerely,

PAUL BARNETSON,
22 Ferndale Road,
Chichester, West Sussex.
August 8.

From Mr John Hartman

Sir, You report that Baroness Hayman says reducing the drink-drive limit was "certainly an option" because there is still a "hard core of offenders who are way over the [current] limit".

So once again, it seems, as with 22 pistol-shooters, the law-abiding majority are to have their freedoms curtailed because this Government cannot logically think through an argument, but wishes to be seen to react to public opinion.

Surely the answer to offenders who are "way over the limit" is to increase the penalties for severe breaches of the law and to target police activity on these hardcore offenders instead of harassing the seven out of eight motorists who, you report, were asked to take and passed — breath tests in England and Wales last year.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN HARTMAN,
42 Gisborne Road,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire.
August 12.

From Mr Richard Simper

Sir, Dr Anderson has made a valuable point about postgraduate students.

I completed a PhD two years ago, with debt that spanned seven years of university education. To undertake a PhD many universities only accept students with a master's degree; these students are very unlikely to be funded. A student will therefore have his/her undergraduate debt, plus a master's debt and PhD debt, I calculate in the region of £22,000.

I am sure that, confronted with this seven years ago, I would never have started a university academic career.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD SIMPER,
61 Cumberland Road,
Loughborough, Leicestershire.
r.simper@bbs.ac.uk
August 5.

Will all radio one day be commercial?

Siren voices lure more of the BBC's listeners

One of life's minor embarrassments is the press conference where there are no questions. Worse is the press conference where no journalists turn up at all, or where the two or three who do are outnumbered by those on the platform all dressed up for their "presentation" and smilingly eager to defend it.

The most obvious reason why silence greeted the call for questions at the quarterly results announcement last week of RAJAR, the agency which does joint research for commercial radio and the BBC, was numbness. The press had so burnt itself out on the subject of Radio 1 and the previous week that statements about percentage points, proving this or that were about as welcome as a year's supply of tapes of *Thought for the Day*.

Another explanation for the hacks' unresponsiveness was that the big news in the numbers — that the audience for Radio 1 has dropped below ten million for the first time in 30 years — has been utterly predictable since Chris Evans left in January. And the big question (well, someone did finally find voice to ask it) will Radio 4's shake-up of its schedules have the same damaging effect of driving away a loyal audience, is unanswerable. Not until the end of next year will there be even a glimpse of the audience's reaction.

Yet when you think of it, silence means respect. That is the only appropriate reaction to a battery of statistics. Three months is a very short time in life of a radio listener. Tiny quivers in RAJAR quarterly results keep both commercial and non-commercial sides of the industry awake at night for a very good reason. They may indicate seismic changes to come.

What to make of the RAJAR revelation that between the end of March and the end of June commercial radio took its highest ever share of listeners? Its 50.2 per cent pushed the BBC to 47.4 per cent, well below the 50 per cent mark which the BBC feels can more comfortably justify its licence fee. One interpretation is that the BBC and commercial radio simply take turns hopping back and forth over the 50 per cent line. But looking back farther, the graph of changes looks like one of those on the walls of boardrooms in *New Yorker* cartoons — straight down.

At the end of 1992 the BBC held 60 per cent of the national radio audience. If you're willing to go back to 1972, of course, you can get an even starker graph: BBC 100 per cent advertising-supported radio, zero. It is not hard to foresee the day when the graph could be totally reversed and all radio becomes commercial radio.



BRENDA MADDOX

But the British listener does not live in a *New Yorker* environment. There is a special pleasure — 75 years old, to judge from celebrations coming up — to be had from radio stations that do not take time out for commercials, singing or otherwise. And the BBC services that show extraordinary stability. Radio 3 and 4, are, unlike Radio 1, unduplicated on the other side. That Radio 3 has held steady at 5 per cent (of the audience over 15 that tunes in at least once a week) in the face of Classic FM's stronger appeal is proof of its strength. Classic FM, with double the reach, has the world's top favourites, but Radio 3 has the Proms.

Rivals could be creeping up on Radio 4's and Radio 5 Live's preserve of news and good talk. London News Radio is celebrating this week because that its quarterly figures show that its reconstruction in the past year is paying off. Relaunching the old LBC and pairing it with a rolling-news station, News Direct, which gives news in sharp 15-minute segments, has worked very well. The company's new owners, including ITN, Reuters and the *Daily Mail*, have now put in a bid for the North West regional radio licence. If rolling-news does well against the London-orientated Today in London, how much better might it do in a region which does not like to be reminded of London all the time?

But these stations are local radio. Commercial radio's development has been just the opposite of the BBC's — local first, national later, much later. Commercial local radio now is clearly dominant over the BBC's variety, by 41. Does this mean that localism is the wave of the future? Probably not. It shows merely that local stations are cheap to start up and their advertisements are of interest to a locally minded audience.

The station to watch, in the light of the Radio 4 renovation, is Talk Radio. It is national and commercial and unlike the others of its kind — Classic Virgin and Atlantic 252 — is devoted to interesting talk not music. RAJAR shows that its listeners (2.2 million a week) stay tuned longer to the other commercial nationals.

So the BBC is right to be worried about national commercial competition — even if the radical remedies to which it seems addicted are the wrong ones. The BBC has the reputation and the resources for its national radio networks to hold onto the legacy of the monopoly years for a long time.

The British listener is a very conservative creature. It changes its habits very slowly, even when young. The 9.7 million a week still tuning to Radio 1, even without Chris Evans, prove it.

The Client's Story



Younger women wonder whether it is safe for them to wear a Tampon overnight.

TAMPAX

THE CLIENT: Magdalena Tzare, 33, Marketing Director UK and Ireland, Trambrands Ltd.

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THE AGENCY: FCB.

WHAT'S THE PLOT? Various women discuss their concerns about using a tampon overnight. The advice of an independent authority reassures them.

WAS IT EXPENSIVE? It cost £100,000. Very fair.

AT WHOM IS IT AIMED? Younger women, 19 to 34. That's when you make up your mind and become brand loyal.

WHAT'S THE STRATEGY? We realised that the toxic shock scare was growing in people's minds. It wasn't enough to say we have confidence in our product.

AH, SO IT'S ALL ABOUT TOXIC SHOCK? Yes. Consumers had this niggling thought. We decided it was important enough to change everything: our packaging, leaflets, our educational programmes.

WEREN'T YOU WORRIED ABOUT SOUNDING PATRONISING? No. We

did a lot of research — five focus groups. Five hundred women looked at the ads, and we talk to 4,000 women every year.

BUT AREN'T YOU TELLING WOMEN WHAT THEY ALREADY KNOW? No. We have two different types of consumers. Older women who are settled in their habits use the product overnight and don't even think about it; but women of 19-22 grew up during the toxic shock scare, and have felt confused and misinformed.

DO YOU LOOK AT OTHER IDEAS? We did try Dawn French. Younger women liked her but it didn't work for all ages.

WHAT'S SOLD THIS SCRIPT TO YOU? The absolute tone of voice. Really young women could relate to the women asking the questions — I'm not alone in this worry. Older women relate to the women with the answers.

WHAT'S THE BEST CAMPAIGN YOU'VE EVER BOUGHT? This is looking like it. Tampax has struggled because of health concerns. We had to face that. We used to use glamorous women. This is a complete U-turn. That's why it's making such an impact.

AND THE WORST? The previous Tampax campaign, *Body Language*. It was awful. It completely missed the way. It showed beautiful, skinny women running around the beach and the street. It provoked us to rethink.

DAVID MCGRAH

Political ads lack fizz

Election ads were tame and forgettable, says David McGrath

Chris Powell, chief executive of Labour's agency DDB/BMP, agrees: "The Tories were veering all over the place." But he refuses to concede that Labour suffered the same problem. "Our strategy was boringly consistent. We went on and on about tax." An insider at M&C Saatchi, who spent the Tory millions, confessed the strategy had been inconsistent: "I can't say anything but I could nod my head if you were here."

Think about it. Millions of pounds later, how many of those posters and party political broadcasts that ran over the past three years can you actually remember? Er, the red eyes. Good. But who were they for? Em, the Tories? Correct, well remembered (although MORI research at the time suggested that 4 out of 5 people were less likely to vote Tory as a result of seeing this ad).

Any more? Remember, we're talking about £40 million in advertising here. Give up? What about the Tory lion with the red tear in his eye? Unfortunately, DRSM research concluded that most people thought it was for Labour. Tony and John as Punch & Judy for the Lib Dems. "17 years under the Tories. Enough is Enough." "New Labour, new taxes." And on and on.

According to estimates, new Labour spent £26 million to get elected, £13 million of it in the past 12 months, at a cost of £1.95 a vote. The Tories spent £20 million in the past 12 months alone — more than £2 for each vote. Tango spends about £10 million a year.

Why are the parties so hopeless at using the skills of the ad agencies to promote themselves? Dominic Field, business director on the Tango account at HHCL, says: "I suspect, as with all big corporations, the problem is they find it hard to agree what they stand for."

At least there are some signs that Labour seems to be thinking ahead. They've launched their summer slogan, "Modern, strong & fair". Hmmm. Think we'll remember that 100 days from now?

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A word from the mother of all mothers

US agony aunt Dr Laura Schlessinger is heading for London, reports Giles Whittell

Snivellers, slackers, adulterers and neglectful parents, brace yourselves or turn off your radios. Dr Laura Schlessinger, America's favourite radio schoolmarm, wants to begin broadcasting in London. She is negotiating with several stations, her handlers say, and her daily blitz on the morals of her callers is expected to 'hit the capital's airwaves in the autumn.'

But no London stations are admitting it. Talks with Capital Radio have so far proved inconclusive and Dr Schlessinger has not been approached, how Dr Schlessinger would be received by Londoners is open to question.

Here in America she was in action last week talking to 'Elizabeth', a caller to her show in Los Angeles who confessed to harbouring 'an extreme amount of hatred for a woman who had an affair with my husband'.

Dr Schlessinger asks: 'What she did was extremely slimy and crappy. But what your husband did was unbelievable. He was the one who was willing to destroy his family for some fun.'

Dr Schlessinger suggested that Elizabeth had shifted all her hate onto the other woman in order to be able to forgive her husband. Elizabeth still thought her feelings were justified.

Dr Schlessinger: 'You want to give her capital punishment, right?'

Elizabeth: 'Yeah.'

Dr Schlessinger: 'Then your husband should die first.'

In the dysfunctional family of American talk show hosts, Dr Laura, as she likes to be called, has cast herself as the mother of all mothers.

She brings impressive credentials to her job, a physiologist Ph D, a post-doctoral certificate in marriage and family counselling and 12 years' private practice as a therapist. But she wears them lightly. In her boiled-down value system, children's needs, especially the intactness of their parents' marriage, are paramount. Last year *Forbes* magazine summed up Dr Schlessinger's rules of thumb: 'Premarital sex? Better have a ring and a wedding date first. Divorce? Not when there are children. Abortion? Only if the mother's life is threatened. Adultery? Read the Ten Commandments.'

Plenty of American talk shows are peddling similarly

old-fashioned prescriptions for personal improvement because they often make sense and they do wonders for ratings. Dr Schlessinger differs in steering clear of politics and daring to give instant solutions to the toughest, most personal, dilemmas, drivetime radio can serve up.

One example: a couple want kids, but both are working and neither can afford to quit. 'Don't have children if you're not going to take care of them. Get a parakeet and put a towel over the cage instead.'

Simple. And great radio. The Dr Schlessinger show is carried by more than 400 stations across North America, drawing 18 million listeners a week and 50,000 callers per programme. In terms of ratings she is the number two radio personality in the US, trailing Rush Limbaugh, and number one in Canada. She has squeezed Oliver North from the prime evening drivetime slot in his home market of Washington, DC, and has expanded her radio success into a lucrative multimedia empire.

Her books, *Ten Stupid Things Women Do To Mess Up Their Lives* and *How Could You Do That?*, have both been *New York Times* bestsellers. The same fate doubtless awaits *Ten Stupid Things Men Do To Mess Up Their Lives*, due out in September.

Her columns are syndicated to 55 newspapers. Her fans wear Dr Laura hats and T-shirts. Her monthly newsletter can be had for \$39.95 (about £25) a year. She made \$7 million (about £4.3 million) last year.

Dr Schlessinger does not believe in self-esteem. She thinks generations of Americans have been dangerously misled into thinking it is right to base important decisions on feelings rather than morals. She has clearly struck a chord.

But in creating her personality cult she has been ably assisted by the rest of the media. Dr Schlessinger has had an exceptionally easy ride from American interviewers.

She is 'the chief moral arbiter of the Nineties', writes a columnist in *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto. Debra Brendis gushes in *The Christian Century* that Dr Schlessinger delivers a shot of 'moral adrenalin'. Yet another interviewer calls her 'almost sinfully good-looking'.

Dr Schlessinger is actually on the scrawny side of petite, with a blonde bob, a dentally correct smile and a fondness for thick make-up. Physically, the most impressive thing about her is a black belt in karate.

Whether her show will travel to London has radio insiders excited. A spokeswoman for Talk Radio, a national station, said that any approach from Dr Schlessinger would be welcome and that she might even be offered a seat next to James Whale, one of its current hosts, Charles Golding, controller of programmes for LBC, said he would like to meet her—but probably would not buy her show. 'It's the accent,' he says.

Dr Schlessinger's camp is so far unsure whether her programme should be broadcast live here.

But the Americans may already be ahead of themselves. It remains to be seen if Londoners will throw themselves into Dr Schlessinger's shock therapy with the self-flagellatory zeal of their transatlantic cousins. They might just listen quietly, bemused, phone firmly off the hook.

HOW WILL THE BRITISH TAKE DR LAURA'S ADVICE?

CLAIRE RAYNER, broadcaster, agony aunt and author: 'I find it a bit disturbing when adults need a schoolmarm figure to wrap them over the knuckles with her cane.'

'The public may like her, but I suspect they'll fall about laughing without her knowing why.'

OLIVER JAMES, clinical psychologist and broadcaster: 'People respond to clear, unequivocal instructions, as opposed to advice. It is sometimes dangerous to give advice without understanding the full context of a person's problems, but her brand of certainty-through-simplicity is bound to score points.'

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE, agony aunt and author: 'I wouldn't phone her as I'd be

terrified about what she would say. I don't feel sorry for people who ring because they know what they are going to get.'

'We've all spent so long blaming people's problems on low self-esteem, their childhood or their fathers and mothers. Dr Schlessinger's usual advice to 'buck up and get on with it' is sometimes best.'

ZELDA WEST-MEADS, Relate marriage counsellor, psychosexual therapist and *Mail on Sunday* agony aunt: 'Many people who seek advice want to be given quick answers and told what to do when it is often more productive to get people to think things through for themselves.'

PETER FOSTER

story, and got no increase on sales.

Yet the obsession with the Royal Family, not only with the Princess but also with the relationship between the Prince of Wales and Camilla Parker Bowles and the question of whether they should marry, has an inevitable effect on public opinion, as polls by *The Guardian* and *The Sun* demonstrated. In a MORI poll for *The Sun* a majority thought the Princess should be free to choose her friends and that the Prince and Mrs Parker Bowles should get married, live at Buckingham Palace, Charles become King but, overwhelmingly, that Mrs Parker Bowles should not be Queen.

More ominously, an ICM poll for *The Guardian* showed that support for the Royal Family has slumped below 50 per cent for the first time, with the over-65s the only age group where a majority believes Britain would be worse off without them.

An accompanying leading article in *The Guardian*, headlined 'The People's Revolt', argued for the first time in any national daily that British monarchism was quite literally dying. 'It is time for Britain's conviction republicans to abandon the political closer and make their strongest case our poll shows they have a ready following.'

Shots of opinion of momentous proportions often go unnoticed. That leading article, in the paper most associated with the ambitions of new Labour, may be one.

PAPER ROUND
Brian MacArthur

No other person excites the interest of readers as much

Diana: mover and shaker

The answer to both questions is yes, she does. Yes, stories about Diana, Princess of Wales, really do move newspapers off the newsagents' shelves—and, yes, they do damage the standing of the monarchy.

At least 750,000 extra national newspapers have been sold on the three days that exclusive photographs of the Princess with Dodi Fayed have appeared in *The Mail on Sunday* (twice), *Sunday Mirror*, *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*. No other person on earth, as *The Sun*'s Editor Stuart Higgins says, excites the interest of readers as much: 'There is an absolute fascination with her that never wanes from our readers' point of view.' He ought to know: sales of *The Sun* rose by 175,000 on Monday when it published seven pages of the Diana-Dodi pictures.

August is a wicked month for the embattled circulation directors of the three mass-market national tabloids. Year on year their sales in July were down by 290,000. With millions of buyers abroad on holiday, sales usually dip still further in August, even though the start of the soccer season offers some consolation. Yet so far this August the summer slump has failed to occur.

The Princess has been particularly significant in the developing battle for supremacy between *The Mail on Sunday* and the *Sunday Mirror*. Just as broadsheets only exceptionally outsell any of the tabloids, so middle-mar-

ket tabloids—the *Mail* and *Express*—only rarely outsell the red tops (although the upmarket *Sunday Times* outsells the mid-market *Express on Sunday* and *The Mail on Sunday* outsells *The People*).

Now *The Mail on Sunday* has the *Sunday Mirror* in its sights—and when its You magazine published a special souvenir issue on the sale of her dresses on August 2, sales were boosted by 176,000 to a record 2313,000, about 75,000 ahead of average sales of the *Sunday Mirror* in July.

That success was undoubtedly the motive for the Mirror Group's determination to win the frenzied battle for the pictures of the Princess with Fayed and to publish them not in the daily but the Sunday paper where they helped to overcome any instant effect of a similar 5p price increase.

The result was stunning. Its scoop, headlined 'The Kiss', showed the Princess for the first time in an apparent clinch with Fayed and was followed by another ten pages



Agony aunt Dr Laura Schlessinger — 'the chief moral arbiter of the Nineties'

THE LISTENER

THE NEWS BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Hack's hackles rise

The Foreign Office could be facing mutiny over a recent decision to award a contract to an American-owned media company. The deal, to produce a series of weekly Foreign Office radio programmes for global distribution, went to Worldwide Television News. WTN beat, among other bidders, the Central Office of Information, which has run the service for 30 years.

WTN's first move was to slash the existing freelance journalists' fee of £55 an interview to £10 an hour, including travel. The hacks, who have worked on the series for years, were told to expect no more than £30 an interview in future. Many have already left in disgust.

But a WTN spokesman insisted: 'There's no shortage of people willing to work for £10 an hour.' An FCO official was bemused. 'Payng by the hour is something we haven't come across before. We will be monitoring WTN's output carefully.'



Marcelle's return
IS Marcelle D'Argy Smith about to be tempted back into the rancorous world of women's magazines? Rumours are gathering pace that the former editor of *Cosmopolitan* is being courted to edit the more sedate *Woman's Journal*. Inquiries to the office are met with a sharp intake of breath. 'It is definitely a rumour but at the moment we don't know what's happening,' said one insider. 'Will you let us know if you find out?'

First-name terms

AWARD for silliest question of the week goes to Kim Sengupta. *The Independent's* suave reporter who followed the trip of Diana, Princess of Wales, to Bosnia. Reporters were told at a briefing that the family of a girl being visited by the Princess were Muslims. 'Yes, but what are their Christian names?' piped up Sengupta. He was ignored by the aid worker but not by his fellow journalists, who teased him mercilessly for the rest of the trip.



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THE TIMES TODAY

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

NEWS

Inflation reaches two-year high

■ Gordon Brown's determination to keep a tight grip on the economy was dealt a severe blow when inflation reached 3.3 per cent, the highest level for nearly two years.

A High Street spending spree, higher mortgage costs and petrol price rises contributed to the sharp increase in the headline rate from 2.9 per cent, busting the Chancellor's target for the second month running..... Page 1, 23

Gulf syndrome campaigner dies at 30

■ A campaigner for official action on "Gulf War syndrome" has died aged 30. Paul Carr of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers suffered a brain tumour, bloated joints and liver problems. His main concern, however, was for his two daughters who both have rare heart conditions. He believed he had passed on to them something he picked up in the Gulf..... Page 1

Royal photo call

For the first time since his honeymoon, the Prince of Wales invited photographers to Balmoral and posed with Prince William and Prince Harry on the first day of their holiday..... Page 1

Mid-air crash

A motorised glider pilot had the cap knocked from his head by a helicopter rotor blade as they collided in mid-air over Yorkshire. Both aircraft made emergency landings after which the 65-year-old glider pilot, who escaped with a cut hand, declined a lift to hospital in a helicopter..... Page 1

Bugging rules

A draft code of conduct allowing police to break in to homes or offices and bug suspects was attacked by lawyers as a licence to spy..... Page 2

'Vicar' exposed

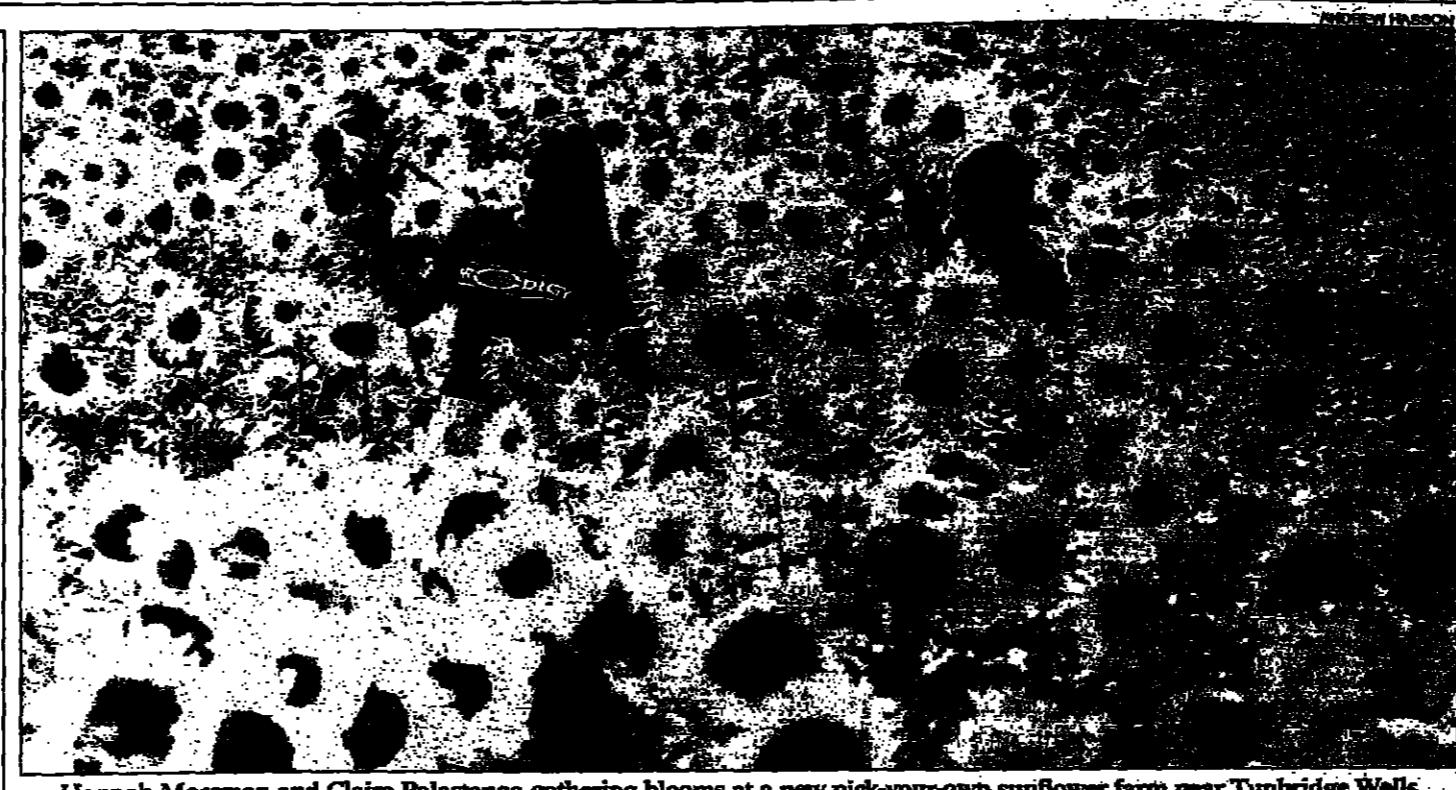
A bogus bishop tricked the public out of £250,000 at charity pub concerts where he appeared as The Singing Vicar. David Valentine was exposed when he was seen kissing one of his "singing nuns"..... Page 3

Ivy League leads

High-earning professions prefer to recruit from an "Ivy League" of traditional universities, according to a survey of employers. Solicitors, barristers, accountants and bankers all take most of their trainees from Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol..... Page 4

Uproar as everything stops for tea

■ A signalman abandoned his box and went home for a cup of tea, leaving two trainloads of passengers stuck on the Carlisle to Settle line. There was no water in the box when he arrived at 6am and by 10.50, he decided he could take no more of the 80F heat and left. The passengers were also pauched: the buffet cars were closed because the caterers did not turn up..... Page 5



Hannah Mossman and Claire Palastanga gathering blooms at a new pick-your-own sunflower farm near Tunbridge Wells

Tax glitch

People are being warned to be wary of using computer software to calculate tax bills after 50,000 users submitted incorrect forms, possibly because of programming errors..... Page 5

Hear now, buy later

Oasis fans turned out in droves to hear the band's new album *Be Here Now* played at Virgin megastores across the country. But they will have to wait until Thursday week to buy it..... Page 6

Rampant mosquitoes

An £8 million project has been launched to try to find a new weapon against malaria, which is running out of control..... Page 7

Presley package

The American National Archives has discarded its studio image to release copious details of President Nixon's meeting with Elvis Presley in 1970..... Page 10

Council of war

Mujahidin commanders gathered at the mouth of the Panjshir Valley to choose an interim government and work out their strategy for what they hope will be the final assault on Kabul..... Page 12

Escape clause

Biljana Plavsic said that she convinced with the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to allow Radovan Karadzic to leave Serb territory, but he refused point blank to go..... Page 13

BUSINESS

Oppenheimer: The Oppenheimer family is to resume management control of De Beers, the world's largest diamond mining group, after 13 years..... Page 23

Swiss banks: The financial predator Martin Ebner has turned his firepower back on Union Bank of Switzerland, one of the country's top three banks..... Page 23

Utilities: Sir Desmond Pitcher's reign as executive chairman of United Utilities is set to end after he bowed to pressure from institutional investors..... Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 Index rose 43.9 points to close at 5075.8. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 102.1 to 101.7 after a fall from \$1.5904 to \$1.5781 and from DM2.9489 to DM2.9584. Page 26

Cricket: The NatWest semi-final was abandoned because of bad light after Glamorgan brought Waqar Younis on to bowl. Essex need six runs to win..... Page 44

Football: John Barnes agreed to move from Liverpool to Newcastle United, having earlier shaken hands on a deal to take him to West Ham United..... Page 44

Rugby union: The headlong rush for change in the game continued with the promise of the introduction of sin bins when the Allied Dunbar Premiership begins later this month..... Page 44

Sailing: Australia were making a determined effort to deprive Italy of the Admiral's Cup as the Fastnet Race built towards a thrilling conclusion off Plymouth..... Page 32

Bard times: A series of classic Shakespeare recordings made in the 1950s and 1960s are to be reissued next week. They feature such promising students as Trevor Nunn and Prunella Scales alongside the leading actors of the day..... Page 30

From premiere: Magnus Lindberg's orchestral work *Feria*, had a powerful impact on its first performance..... Page 30

Edinburgh nights: Reviews from the festival include the first night of Twyla Tharp's dance company, the Royal Opera's production of *Reame's Plate* and a new staging of *Measure for Measure*..... Page 20

Autumn mists: It hardly seems the moment, really, to be thinking about tweeds in the middle of the dog days of August, but Jane Shilling is trying..... Page 14

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Antiquated formula proving hard to digest

By ERIC REGGIE

READER'S DIGEST, the most widely read magazine in the world, has always been a master of condensation. Editors seamlessly reduced whole books to a few pages. In a country famous for the gnat-like attention span of its inhabitants, this formula, combined with "God-Country-Family" values, worked beautifully and fortunes rolled in decade after decade.

In recent years, the company has become expert at another form of condensation — that of profits. Since 1994, earnings and revenues have been in free fall, taking the shares down with them. With the market valuation halved, angry investors have been calling for a shake-up.

Reader's Digest

The organisation's problems are further evidence that even the mighty can fall, raging bull market or not. Dow Jones, owner of *The Wall Street Journal*, another famous name in American publishing, is going through a similar crisis.

Reader's Digest is the victim of demographics: its geriatric readership profile means it

must recruit some 5 million new readers a year just to maintain its circulation of 27.5 million, intense competition and seeming inability to change with the times. In the era of the Democrats, the magazine still runs articles such as "Must our prisons be resorts?" as well as timeless, syrupy features like "Un-

forgettable Shirley Temple". The rest of the empire is not faring well either. Its much larger direct-mail business, which sells books, videos and CDs, has stalled and analysts say the company has done little to exploit its international database of 100 million names, an asset that any large retailer would find invaluable.

There was a time when *Reader's Digest* paid little attention to profitability. Founded in 1922 with a \$600 investment, *Reader's Digest* treated its employees well and gave away most of its money. Employees were driven to work in company buses and did not have to work on Fridays in May so that gardens could be tended. The headquarters, in Chappaqua, New York, are still decorated

with Chagalls and Matisses in what has been called the corporate world's finest collection of Impressionist art.

Two charitable trusts control the company: non-voting shares were sold to the public in 1990 — and institutions such as the Lincoln Center in New York and the Bronx Zoo have been the recipients of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Reader's Digest is an old business with old ideas. But it remains one of the world's best-known brand names and its international reach is impressive. Almost half of its sales are in Europe. Unless the company can find an executive team to rejuvenate the business, *Reader's Digest* risks becoming a quaint relic of the 20th century.

Healthcare cuts knock Smith & Nephew

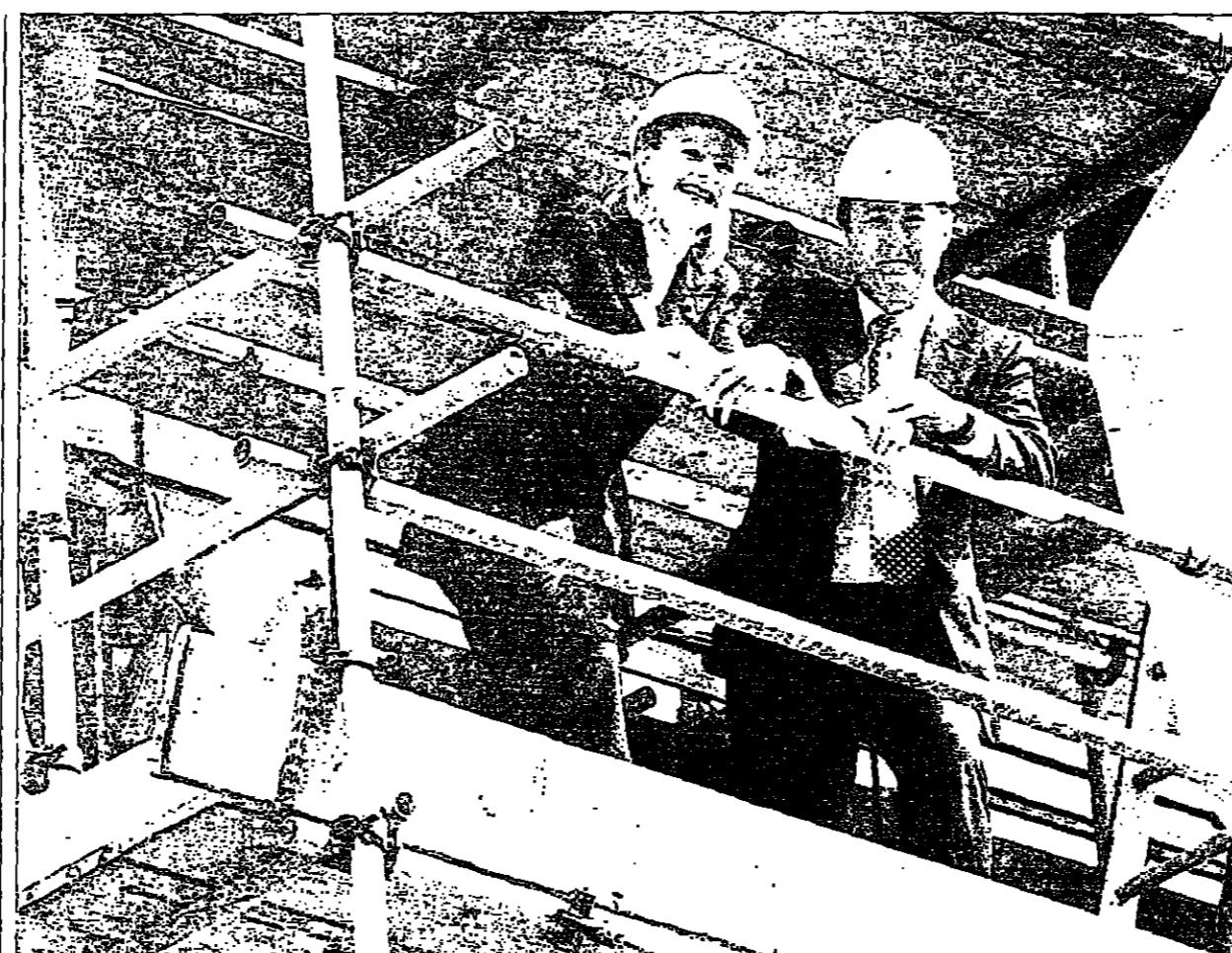
By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CUTS in government spending on healthcare across Europe are hitting Smith & Nephew which is also continuing to feel the impact of the strong pound.

The company, which makes Elastoplast plasters, skin products, artificial knees and keyhole surgery equipment, said that sales on the Continent were flat in the first half as Germany, France and Italy curbed health spending as part of their drive to qualify for European monetary union. A year ago, European sales showed a 5 per cent rise.

Chris O'Donnell, chief executive, said he expected to see a slight improvement in European sales in the second half.

The strong pound knocked



Brick by brick: Barbara Moorhouse, finance director, and John Morgan, chief executive of Morgan Sindall, the construction group, which yesterday reported a 48 per cent jump in pre-tax profits for

the six months to June 30, from £2.22 million to £3.28 million. Turnover rose 45.6 per cent, from £112.7 million to £161.9 million, and earnings per share rose 29 per cent, from 5.52p to 7.12p. The

company blamed problems with its refurbishing business on over-expansion. The business has been refocused at a cost of about £500,000. A dividend of 1.67p, compared with 1.35p, is due on October 1.

Decline in M&A activity continues

MERGERS and acquisitions involving British companies fell in the second quarter of the year, according to Government statistics out yesterday.

Expenditure on acquisitions in Britain by overseas companies decreased to £2.7 billion from the high value recorded in the previous quarter. The value recorded in quarter one partly reflected the acquisition of a number of electricity companies by overseas companies.

Acquisitions overseas by British companies decreased in value to £2.2 billion in the second quarter, and acquisitions of UK companies by other British companies was £1.8 billion, continuing the low level recorded in the previous quarter.

Figures published by *Acquisitions Monthly* yesterday showed that Linklaters & Paines consolidated its position in the league table of lawyers acting for financial advisers or companies in British takeovers during the first half of the year. Linklaters worked on 18 deals worth a total of £5.9 billion.

Tempus, page 26

BOC profits hit by strength of pound

By PAUL DURMAN

BOC GROUP, the gases company, that recently put its healthcare business up for sale, yesterday became the latest victim of the strong fall.

Danny Rosenkranz, chief executive, said BOC was seeing a lot of interest in Ohmeda, the healthcare business based around anaesthetic gases and equipment. BOC expects to receive preliminary bids around the end of this month, and hopes to complete the sale by Christmas.

The business contributed £35.2 million, a 2 per cent decline, excluding currencies. Profits from medical devices were also damaged by exchange rate movements.

Celtic consoles fans with City success

By CHRIS AYRES

CELTIC Football Club might have disappointed in the Scottish Premier League last season, but its performance in the City will have given consolation to fans who are investors.

In the year to June, Celtic turned a pre-tax loss of £1 million into a profit of £5.1 million on turnover of £22.2 million, up nearly 40 per cent from £16 million in the previous period. Earnings per share were 15.93 — although investors will still not be paid a dividend.

Fergus McCann, chairman of Celtic, reassured fans that the club's profits would be invested in new players. "Foot-

ball success will come hand in hand with our success as a business," he said. His promise was immediately followed by the purchase of Regi Blinker from Sheffield Wednesday for £4.5 million.

The club also reported that attendances rose 37 per cent to almost 1.7 million last year, with sales of season tickets staying the highest at any British club.

Celtic's merchandising sales also continued to grow, reflecting the club's recent three-year sponsorship deal with Umbro. Celtic is now planning to build a retail megastore alongside a Celtic museum and visitors' centre.

Bula investor calls for inquiry

By EILEEN McCABE
IN DUBLIN

A SHAREHOLDER of Bula Resources, the troubled Irish exploration company, yesterday called for its affairs to be investigated after a series of disastrous escapades in Russia.

She along with several other shareholders at the company's packed annual general meeting in a Dublin hotel demanded that board members vigorously pursue their investigations into the multimillion pound losses suffered by

the company as a result of its Russian deals. Earlier, Tom Fitzpatrick, Bula's chairman, told shareholders that the company had submitted a £19 million (£5.5 million) claim against Gouldens, the London solicitors, which advised the company on its failed transaction with Mir-Ory, the Russian group, in 1994. Gouldens has been invited to respond by August 29 after which Bula says legal proceedings will start in London.

He also revealed that the board has

still not managed to discover the identity of the beneficial owner of the Mir Oil company, with which Bula agreed to develop the controversial Salymskoye oilfield in Russia in 1995. Mr Fitzpatrick said that at the time of the deal, Jim Stanley, then Bula's chairman and chief executive, gave written confirmation that he or no party connected with him had any interest in Mir.

So for Bula has discovered that a South African resident who was named as the owner of Mir at the time of the deal is no longer the owner. Investigations are continuing, he said. Glowing test results at Salymskoye were also found to be incorrect.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Alpha Airports names chief executive

ALPHA AIRPORTS, the duty free shops and air catering group part owned by Mohamed Al Fayed, has at last found a replacement for Paul Harrison, the chief executive who quit in April. Kevin Abbot, a director of Rexan, will take on the role from October 1. Mr Abbot, 43, has worked at Rexan since 1994, initially running international packaging and then global food and beverages packaging. He earlier spent 16 years at Redland, where he was a main board director from 1988 to 1994.

Rodney Galpin, chairman of Alpha Airports, said that Mr Abbot was selected because of his background in marketing and his knowledge, through Redland, of Asian markets.

Sweet smell of success

ESTEE LAUDER, the cosmetics and fragrances company, reported higher earnings for the fourth quarter and full fiscal year, citing strong sales in all of its brands. For the year to June 30, sales rose 9 per cent, to \$3.4 billion (£2 billion) from \$3.2 billion last time. Excluding the impact of foreign currency translation, net sales increased 9 per cent during the year. Earnings rose to \$197.6 million, or \$1.46 a share, from \$102.9 million. Comparable per-share figures were not available, as the company went public in November, 1995.

Lloyd's conversion plan

STACE BARR, the Lloyd's members' agency, yesterday issued the prospectus for its plan to convert traditional names to limited liability underwriting. Under the scheme, developed with the Angerstein Lloyd's fund, names will hold shares in a new underwriting vehicle after giving over their rights to participate on syndicates. Names will make their funds at Lloyd's available for continued underwriting, while Angerstein will make money available to meet a change in capital requirements at the insurance market.

Easynet confident

EASYNET, Britain's second-largest Internet access provider, said it will break into profit in the last three months of the year, after generating a portfolio of high-paying business customers. The company, which has been in the red since its inception three years ago, failed to stem interim losses in the first six months of the year with a pre-tax loss of £724,000 (£727,000) on sales that grew from £2.48 million to £1.55 million. Its shares, which joined the Alternative Investment Market at 97.5p in March last year, fell 4.5p to 79.5p.

Saracen approached

SARACEN VALUE, the smaller companies investment trust, yesterday said it has been approached by fund managers wanting to oust the current team. The Saracen board on Monday met HSBC Asset Management, which claims to have the support of 50 per cent of Saracen shareholders for its bid to replace SFM, which has been running the trust since 1994. Saracen said: "The HSBC UK Smaller Companies unit trust has been in existence for nine months and we are concerned that this is a short period in which to judge a fund manager's ability."

Apple expecting loss

APPLE COMPUTER, in which Microsoft is investing \$150 million (£94 million), expects to report another loss for the fiscal fourth quarter ending in September, and said sales for the period will be lower than a year ago. Apple "does not believe it will return to profitability in the fourth quarter", the company disclosed in a filing on Monday with the Securities and Exchange Commission. "The company believes that net sales will be below the prior year's comparable periods through at least the first quarter of 1998, if not longer."

Epwin turnover up 27%

EPWIN, the building products group that specialises in window installations, lifted pre-tax profits by 14.5 per cent in the six months to June 28, from £2 million to £2.3 million, on turnover of £43.6 million, up 27 per cent from £34.3 million. Earnings per share were up 15 per cent, from 6p to 6.9p. An interim dividend of 3.15p (2.9p) will be paid on October 13. The company, which has made four acquisitions in the past year for a total of £6 million, says that it is now ready to increase its market share.

NBS mutuality package

NEWCASTLE Building Society's pre-tax profits fell from £4.6 million to £3.5 million for the first half of this year because of the society's mutual benefit package. Bill Midgley, chief executive, said: "Around £740,000 was awarded to borrowers who qualified under the loyalty bonus schemes and investors, both existing and new, who benefit from the society's interest rate structure. If we had maintained the same margin as the average converting society of 1.8 per cent, profits would have risen by 40 per cent."

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia S	2.25	2.07	0.670	0.611
Austria Sch	21.67	20.01	—	—
Belgium Fr	63.89	58.90	2.63	2.39
Canada S	2.265	2.137	—	—
Denmark Kr	11.79	10.99	12.69	11.75
Finland M	9.93	8.58	—	—
France Fr	16.37	15.59	250.29	240.50
Germany Dm	3.10	2.88	13.45	12.35
Greece Dr	4.95	4.47	2.45	2.34
Hong Kong S	12.29	11.82	269.99	240.01
Iceland I	1.16	1.07	—	—
Ireland Shk	5.90	5.25	—	—
Italy L	12.29	11.70	267.90	240.50
Japan Yen	198.23	180.70	1.885	1.542

Rates for small denominations bank notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Other rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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So, farewell then, Sir Des. Yesterday, the pragmatic Mr Merseyside lost his battle to hang onto power and by the autumn he will be out of the boardroom of the haphazard United Utilities. Single-handedly, he has done more to put a stop to the coupling of the roles of chairman and chief executive than all the committees on corporate governance combined.

Sir Desmond does not believe in power sharing but institutional investors do. They are unhappy with the notion that one man can determine the shape of a company's strategy and preside over its implementation, particularly when he presides as Sir Des does, with an arrogant disregard for the opinions of others.

In theory, a contingent of strong non-executive directors should be able to keep a strong corporate boss in check. But clearly this had not been the case at United Utilities, where it was only after shareholder discontent over the running of the company reached screaming pitch that Sir Peter Middleton and his colleagues were spurred into action. Even seasoned corporate operators may have quaked at the prospect of going into battle against Sir Desmond, although the imminent arrival of British Aerospace's punchy Sir Dick Evans on the United Utilities board might have provided some interesting confrontations.

They will not be necessary now, since the headquarters are about to go searching for a new, and non-executive chairman for the company. But the unsavoury episode will certainly have ensured that investors step up their objections to a concentration of power in a single being.

Sir Ronald Hampel and his colleagues chose not to outlaw the idea of a combined chairman and chief executive. Instead, they called for the appointment of a tough independent non-executive director to be the voice of investors. What the United Utilities case indicates is that investors can be driven into exercising those vocal chords and, when they do, they demand that the roles be split.

Not all those who currently combine the chairman and chief executive roles exhibit megalomaniac tendencies, but however well behaved and effective they may be, they are likely to be the last of the line. If they wish to avoid controversy, they may already be planning sensible statements on the subject of succession, for in many cases these individuals are so closely identified with the success of their companies that there are legitimate concerns as to how the

business will cope without them. John Ribble at British Land, Sir Richard Greenbury at Marks & Spencer and Garry Weston at Associated British Foods have all served shareholders with style. They are not in the habit of losing top managers with the unnerving speed that Sir Desmond did. But they would each do well to think of which two individuals could best step into the single pair of shoes that they will one day have to vacate.

Inflation deduction with touch of Alice

Surprise was the element missing from the inflation figures yesterday. Unusually high prices for vegetables and rising petrol prices may have contributed to a slight increase in the headline figure but, thanks to the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, we know there is nothing to fear.

Last week the MPC performed the impressive verbal feat of talking down the pound by indicating its confidence that the economy had been brought back into line and more interest rate increases would be unnecessary in the short term. We can safely assume that this opinion was based on advance warning of the picture that we were all allowed to see yesterday, and a peek at the Bank's inflation report which is about to be made public.

Just what the figures really mean depends on which set you choose to peer at most closely. Ironically, the headline figure of 3.3 per cent is swollen as a result of those measures that the Chancellor introduced to stop the spending boom and quell a potential hike in inflation. Alice in Wonderland herself might have spotted something awry here. So, on to what is known as RPI, which strips out the excise increases and produces a July figure unchanged on June.

Blame the weather for smudging the figures and strip out unseasonal food price increases, and it is possible to argue that inflation was actually marginally lower last month.

At this point, however, Alice might begin to think that inflation could vanish, like the Cheshire cat's smile, if one chose to ignore everything that had risen in price. On balance, the message in the figures is that inflation is under control. And away from the governmental calculators, that is also the conclusion. In the high street there is no evidence of windfall spending pushing up prices, albeit that it is bringing retailers some welcome extra business. This week's figures from manufacturing indicated that there is no upward pressure on prices coming from that direction, with raw material costs falling significantly over the past month.

It is enough to make Alice wonder whether the MPC

needed that last hike in interest rates. It will penalise industry, which needs to invest, and which is already bemoaning the agonies of the strong pound. But consolation comes from the fact that at least it was only a quarter of a per cent, and not the full point or more suggested by those who wanted drastic action from the newly independent Bank.

Borrower beware — buyer beware

Legislation will never be able to prevent some people borrowing more than they can afford. When the culprits are would-be property moguls, they are merely gearing up, and if they go bust the chances are that they will be back to ask another banker for help before long. But when the borrowers are individuals aiming to survive rather than make a fortune, the consequences of overborrowing can be personal catastrophe.

Most lenders are aware of this simple truth. While they could take refuge in the *caveat emptor* approach to business, they try to tread a careful line between what people want to borrow and what

they can afford to borrow. After all, there is little point in shovelling out the cash unless you will be able to pull it back, complete with interest.

But it remains the case that many personal borrowers remain oblivious to the level of interest that will be charged, their concern being only to get their hands on the money they need. Thus it is that lenders serving the most disadvantaged sections of society charge the highest rates of interest.

Yesterday, one of these companies — truly the lender of the last resort — said it would review its entire loan portfolio.

If it has a view to ever recovering the loans, it may find some nasty surprises in its researches. But the likelihood is that it has already pocketed a profit by selling on those loans to another institution. *Caveat emptor*, as they say.

Gnomes of UBS

FRESH from his victory in persuading Credit Suisse to merge with Winterthur, Martin Ebner is renewing his attack on UBS. The Swiss bank has successfully kept him at bay for three years, but he is not one to give up. His "summer vision" for Winterthur having been accomplished, the UBS gnomes may feel they need to treat him a little more facetiously. Any ideas for carefully watering down his stake would be courting danger.

General Accident boosted by Provident deal

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

GENERAL ACCIDENT, the composite insurer, announced a 35 per cent leap in interim pre-tax profits to a record £260 million yesterday as last year's acquisition of Provident Mutual boosted an already strong performance in the UK.

The addition of Provident Mutual, a Scottish pensions company, increased life and pensions sales by 19 per cent to £105 million while profits rose 37 per cent to £63 million.

On general insurance, GA is the first UK player to declare an underwriting profit this year, up £8 million to £19 million on slightly reduced premiums of £771 million. While home and property cover delivered growing profits, and its Lloyd's marine business broke even, losses from motor insurance increased as claims and low-cost competition surged.

Bob Scott, group chief executive, praised the UK results in the context of universal competition. "It used to be the case that one area would balance out another. Now all our business units are reporting increased competition."

Worldwide general premiums fell £20 million to £2.21 billion as a result. The company is making 600 staff redundant in the US where losses fell back to \$79 million. Corrective action in Canada,



Bob Scott said GA faced competition in every area

including withdrawing sewerage coverage in Ontario, reduced losses to \$26 million. The company has withdrawn its personal business in Denmark and The Netherlands and is reviewing its position in other countries after incurring a £20 million loss in Europe.

Realised investment gains

more than doubled to £344 million as GA reduced its

Holliday sees 64% surge in profits

By MARK COURT

HOLLIDAY CHEMICAL the speciality chemicals group, began its rehabilitation in the City by announcing a 64 per cent increase in half-year pre-tax profits yesterday.

The profits surge, from £8.1 million to £13.4 million, was driven by Uquifa, its Spanish pharmaceutical subsidiary, which manufactures Ranitidine, the active ingredient for the generic rival to Zantac, Glaxo Wellcome's stomach ulcer drug that came off patent in the US last month.

Ranitidine contributed £4 million to profits in the first half and Michael Pearman, Holliday's chairman, said the product had "excellent growth prospects".

Mark Robbins, joint chief executive, said the product would contribute at least £4 million in the second half. "How much it moves forward is up to the open market, which is difficult to forecast. We don't know how many people will go to market over the next few years," he said.

An interim dividend of 2.5p, compared with 2.1p, will be paid on October 1.

Holliday has given its shareholders a rollercoaster ride since its flotation in 1993. Brokers believe that Ranitidine might help to restore the company's reputation in the City.

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Tempus, page 26

Sedgwick denies search for a merger partner

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

SAX RILEY, chairman of Sedgwick, the insurance broker, insisted yesterday the company would remain independent after speculation grew that it was looking for a merger partner.

Earlier Mr Riley had unfavourably compared Sedgwick's strategy of constantly aiming to grow in size and turnover with Willis Corroon, a rival, whose chairman John Reeve has publicly stated his opposition to consolidation in the sector. The City took this as a hint that Sedgwick had

approached Willis Corroon and been rebuffed.

Mr Riley also denied that Sedgwick's consultancy business had suffered as a result of its "naming and shaming" over pensions mis-selling by

Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary, in May. Ms Liddell criticised Sedgwick and Legal & General for their attitude to the pensions review attempting to clear up to 500,000 potential cases of mis-selling by the end of next year.

Mr Riley said: "We have been in touch with all of our

clients and they support our position. We are continuing to pick up new business." Half-year results showed consultancy revenues had risen £12.1 million to £113.8 million. He insisted Sedgwick, which has 6,000 pension transfer cases to review, would meet the Government's timetable.

The strong pound knocked £7 million off the group's interim profits. On constant exchange rates pre-tax profits rose 16 per cent to £66.5 million. The dividend remains at 3p.

Halstead hit in Australia

SHARES in the James Halstead Group, the floor coverings and tents maker, tumbled from 242.5p to 205p yesterday after a profit warning (Adam Jones writes).

The problems centre on Driza-Bone, its Australian wet-weather clothing subsidiary, which has been hit by a stock build-up.

Halstead blamed the strong Australian dollar and waning government support for exporters. It said profits could fall 20 per cent below market expectations for the year to June 30 of £9.5 million before tax.



General Accident

Continued strong performance

6 MONTHS' RESULTS

	6 Months to 30.6.97	6 Months to 30.6.96
	Estimated £m	Estimated £m
General Premiums	2,210	2,230
Life Premiums	956	853
Underwriting Result	(66)	(105)
Investment Income	280	272
Life Profits	63	46
Operating Profit before Taxation	260	193
Profit Attributable to Ordinary Shareholders	410	226
Operating Earnings per Ordinary Share	40.3p	26.8p
Interim Dividend per Ordinary Share	12.5p	11.4p

Record first half operating pre-tax profit of £260m (1996: £193m).

Continued UK underwriting profitability of £19m (1996: £11m).

Profit contribution from life operations up by 37% to £63m.

Worldwide underwriting deficit reduced by 37% to £66m.

Growth in investment earnings in local currencies of 7%.

Interim dividend up 9.6% at 12.5p per share.

A copy of the Interim Announcement will be posted to Shareholders on 16th August 1997. Copies may also be obtained from the office of the Secretary at the address below.

General Accident plc

General Accident plc, World Headquarters: Pitheavlis, Perth, Scotland PH2 0NH

A copy of the results is available on Internet: <http://www.ga.co.uk>

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Allied Domecq in demand as investors change tack

THE search is under way among City investors for value. Now that the deadlock created by a strong pound has been broken by the Bank of England's view that interest rates have peaked, investors can move away from the safe sales and drug companies and look further afield.

Allied Domecq was one beneficiary of this change of tack, as its price climbing 17p to a high for the year of 474½p as over four million shares changed hands.

As the stale bulls are quick to testify, the shares have been poor performers, well overshadowed by Guinness 5½p dearer at 588p, and Grand Metropolitan, 5p higher at 592½p. There is plenty of value tied up in Allied's portfolio of well-known brands, which could be unlocked if someone were to find the courage. And with the shares yielding 6 per cent, they are proving difficult to ignore.

Lehman Brothers also joined the rush for value yesterday by raising its recommendation in GKN, up 30p at £12.71, from "neutral" to "outperform" in the wake of last week's profits news. The broker is said to be excited by prospects and is forecasting earnings growth of 15 per cent a year. Just a day before the figures were released on August 5, the shares were about £10.60.

Another company that has seen its share price advance in the past week is Vendome, where currency factors have come into play. Last Thursday, as the pound started to lose ground against the dollar and mark, after interest rates had risen for the fourth month in a row, the shares were trading at the 450p level. They closed last night 21½p higher at 51p.

Other companies reckoned to be offering good value were BAT Industries, up 17½p at 517½p, BT, 10p to 199½p, Low & Boar, 19p to 267½p, and Securicor, which still owns a 40 per cent stake in Celnet, 15½p to 300½p.

Stock shortages continued to drive the rest of the equity market higher, enabling the FTSE 100 index to nudge back towards its record level. It finished just a shade below its best of the day with a rise of 43.9 at 5,075.8 as total turnover reached 826 million shares.

Investors took the news of the higher than expected inflation number in their stride.



Safeway, 12p higher, said by one broker to be oversold

Sentiment remains underpinned by comments from the Bank of England, suggesting rates may have risen far enough for the time being.

The drug companies were a dull market after Morgan Stanley, the US securities house, took the view that there was only limited scope for "upside earnings surprise" among their highly rated US peer groups. Glaxo Wellcome

fell 13p to £12.75, and Zeneca 17½p to 199½p.

Persistent talk of a break-up bid lifted Dalgety 6½p to 273p.

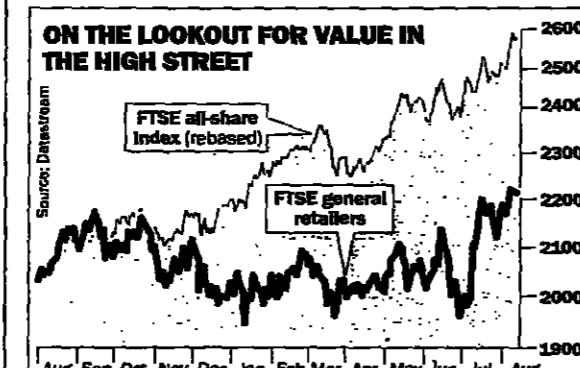
Weekend reports suggested

ING Barings, the merchant bank, was putting together a £900 million war chest.

Dalgety looks vulnerable to a bid after two profits warnings and a dividend cut.

Hillsdown Holdings stood

out with a rise of 4½p to 168p



KINGFISHER increased 5½p to 750p and Dixons rose 10p to 618p as Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, reiterated its positive stance on the shares.

The move came after publication of the July survey from the British Retail Consortium (BRC) that showed leading retailers' sales climbing as consumers' spending on big-ticket items. We have merely reiterated our view. They are too lowly rated with strong earnings prospects. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 12.54 ahead at 8,074.65.

4.8 per cent. Sales of white goods, including television, audio equipment, video and camcorders were particularly strong.

The broker has taken heart from this and says that the main beneficiaries will be Dixons and Kingfisher, which owns Comet.

Rod Forest, of Laing, says: "The BRC survey confirms that the windfalls are being spent on big-ticket items. We have merely reiterated our view. They are too lowly rated with strong earnings prospects. Most of the sector leaders appear fully valued."

The best performance was

reserved for index-linked issues which scored rises of up to 11, while in the futures pit the September series of the long gilt put on 1½% at £114½.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was £3.32 better at £110½, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was three ticks lower at £102½.

□ **NYX-NYX**: Shares clung to modest gains in late morning trade, with dealers reluctant to take major positions in advance of figures on key retail sales and consumer price. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 12.54 ahead at 8,074.65.

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□ **NYX-NYX**: Shares clung

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 8,074.65 (+12.54)
S&P Composite 940.08 (+3.08)

Tokyo:
Nikkei average 10,099.11 (+274.93)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 16,383.41 (+77.08)

Amsterdam:
EOE Index 978.40 (+5.33)

Sydney:
AD 2,650.50 (+16.70)

Frankfurt:
DAX 3,63.09 (+20.96)

Singapore:
Straits 1,893.46 (+0.40)

Brussels:
General 1,399.52 (+171.97)

Paris:
CAC-40 2,998.57 (+15.13)

Zurich:
SMA Gen 1,236.20 (+4.93)

London:
FTSE 100 3,224.5 (+20.40)

FTSE 250 5,075.6 (+14.59)

FTSE 350 4,700.0 (+28.85)

FTSE Eurotrack 100 3,438.0 (+19.39)

FTSE All-Share 2,757.29 (+41.12)

FTSE Financials 2,376.39 (+18.87)

FTSE Financials 2,374.30 (+22.13)

FTSE Govt Secs 1,625.10 (+17.17)

FTSE Govt Secs 1,625.10 (+17.17)

Bargains 5,094.3

SEAO Volume 826.00

US 1,578.61 (+0.023)

German Mark 2,939.4 (+0.0105)

Deutsche Index 101.71 (-0.6)

Bank of England official Close Rate 1,496.3

ESDR 1,496.3

RPX 1,954.70 (+3.76) Jan 1987-100

RPX 1,954.70 (+3.76) Jan 1987-100

RECENT ISSUES

Billion 236½ - 1

Blakes Clothing 71½ - 1

Bristol & West Prf 107½ + 5½

Cammell Laird 141 + 10½

Delcam 269 -

EMI 115 -

Fairfield Ents 117½ -

Fairplace Consulting 3½ -

GR Holdings 65 -

Galen Holdings 194½ -

Gremillion Group 131½ -

Helicon Publsg 102½ -

Ionica Group 381½ - 2½

Kingfisher Leisure 175½ -

Lepco 78 -

Metroline 207½ -

Reabourne Merlin 108½ -

Sovereign 107½ -

Severn Trent B 37½ -

Stentor Warrants 46½ -

Ted Baker 137½ -

Thorn B 20½ -

Viglen Technology 66 - 1

RIGHTS ISSUES

Active Imaging n/p 1 -

Fortune Oil n/p (1) 3 -

Golden Land n/p (21) 2½ -

Logica n/p (605) 220 + 11½

MAJOR CHANGES

Rises:

Gekko 2,830 (+260)

MAID 220p (+150)

Bil Btch 187p (+110)

Xenova 260p (+180)

Rosboro 181p (+110)

Vanguard 441p (+220)

Probition 615p (+230)

Allied Domecq 474p (+170)

Caledonia 870p (+230)

Horzrock 313p (+110)

Safeway 366p (+120)

FALLS:

Richards 20p (-10p)

Halsfield (J) 205p (-37p)

Evander 206p (-14p)

Central Pacific 407p (-150)

Argos 638p (-220)

Travis Perkins 485p (-110)

Closing Prices Page 29

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Period Open High Low Set Vol

Long Gilt Sep 97 114-11 114-28 114-19 114-24 5,470

Previous open interest 186,001

German Govt Bond Sep 97 101.95 102.34 101.92 102.32 10,023

Previous open interest 284,667

Italian Govt Bond (Sep) 97 95.62 95.88 95.60 95.85 4,999

Previous open interest 105,028

Japanese Govt Bond (JGB) Sep 97 126.46 126.46 126.35 126.35 3,154

Three Mth Sterling Sep 97 92.76 92.79 92.75 92.78 3,057

Previous open interest 6,034,000

Three Mth Euromark Sep 97 90.52 90.67 90.54 90.65 3,025

Three Mth Eurolibra Sep 97 91.23 91.22 91.20 91.22 3,050

Three Mth Eurofranc Sep 97 91.50 91.55 91.50 91.53 1,519

Three Mth Euroyen Sep 97 92.23 92.23 92.20 92.23 0

Three Mth Euroswiss Sep 97 94.45 94.46 94.45 94.45 743

Three Mth Ecu Sep 9

The Keswick star is eclipsed at Hong Kong's new dawn

Family charm offensive may have been left too late says Fraser Nelson

As the crowds celebrated the handover of Hong Kong to Beijing, Henry Keswick was in one of the island's hospitals. Chinese mystics might see more in his misfortune than merely a shoulder shattered in a fall, and see a symbol of an ailing dynasty.

The Keswick empire, created 163 years ago and progressing from opium shipments to a vast array of investments, ranging from insurance to Kwik Save stores, now seems unlikely to survive intact for a future generation.

In Hong Kong, its businesses are under threat of local takeover. In Britain, Sir Chips Keswick is struggling to rebuild the reputation of Hambro's, where he is executive chairman. Henry's wife, Tessa, who used to be able to glory in a powerful role advising the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is now having to work hard to find political allies in the new administration. In short, the Keswicks are beginning to look as if all their appearances in the gossip columns have eventually brought on them the curse of *Hello!* magazine: life is looking tough.

Jardine Matheson — which has for generations been the family's financial powerhouse — has found itself without friends in high places in its traditional base, Hong Kong. Unless they forge some new contacts soon, the brothers could be forced to give up their multibillion pound empire and cut the dynasty off completely from Hong Kong. But after the way they bungled their relations with the Chinese Government in the run-up to the handover, that may prove too difficult.

Although the red flag has been hoisted over most of



Jonathan Powell

Tessa Keswick advised former Chancellor



Sir Charles and Carla Powell close to former PM



Sir Chips Keswick

Simon Keswick

Hong Kong's leading business institutions.

Jardine Matheson still controls 40 per cent of the offices in the colony. Its other interests are so vast that, it can be argued, Jardine is still running the former colony as a kind of involuntary joint venture with Beijing.

But, having spent the best part of the past decade thinking of ways to escape Beijing's clutches, transferring their company's listing to Singapore and moving its legal base to Bermuda, while keeping themselves in London, establishing a happier partnership looks unlikely.

Beijing has scowled at the brothers from a distance. When the brothers led the flight to dormitories outside Hong Kong, Chinese officials regarded their company as the worst of the "capitalist run-

ning dogs". However, it is remembered that the brothers occasionally seemed to forget that no man nor Margaret Thatcher could call him, is already seen as one of Peter Mandelson's confidants.

Jonathan Powell, Sir Charles's brother, has become Tony Blair's chief of staff.

But this is cold comfort to the Keswicks' Hong Kong operations, which are being forced to make friends with the Chinese or face decline in the cold.

Enter Li Ka-shing, a Hong Kong property tycoon known to the locals as "superman". He is the Keswicks' equal and opposite: a home-grown tycoon, now the eighth-richest man in the world, who runs a £40 billion empire that owns virtually every Hong Kong office that Jardine does not.

who once said her husband's deepest wish was to be stuck in an underground tunnel where neither she nor Margaret Thatcher could call him, is already seen as one of Peter Mandelson's confidants.

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Rather than build his empire by shipping mind-altering drugs to the Chinese, he kicked off selling plastic flowers to the Americans. He has become Beijing's darling by investing heavily in China, making high-profile charity donations and taking a low-key approach to wealth.

His latest move — taking a 3 per cent stake in Jardine — has triggered speculation that superman will make an outright bid that the beleaguered Keswicks will be forced to accept.

Mr Li made an attempt in 1988 as part of a consortium, scaring the company into ring-fencing itself with as much overseas legislation as it could muster. The result was a complex ownership structure that gives the Keswicks 45 per cent of the vote in Jardine Matheson with a 7 per cent

direct interest. More vulnerable is Hongkong Land, with its lucrative property interests. Its weaker links with Jardine Matheson make it a more attractive target.

Mr Li's approach comes at a time when the Keswicks are beginning to mount an unconvincing charm offensive to the Chinese. They have been attempting a kind of corporate glasnost with the Chinese. But they have resisted China's invitation to return the listing of Jardine's shares to Hong Kong, which many see as the essential olive branch.

Henry's biggest coup to date was meeting Zhu Rongji, Senior Vice-Premier of China, who he said assured him equal treatment in all business dealings. However, Jardine still resolutely differs from other "hongs". It has not attempted to exploit growth in China by selling stakes to mainland businesses.

Even with the tacit "no hostilities" assurance from the Chinese, the Keswicks will find the investment community far less forgiving. So much time has been spent seeking ways to avoid the Communists getting a hold of their company that its financial performance has slipped.

One need only look at a couple of their chosen escape pods to see why Mr Li's offer may be welcomed. Looking for safe vehicles to transfer some capital into Trafalgar House and Kwik Save were chosen as safe vehicles. Both performed dismally and were derided in the City.

Mr Li is preparing to hand over his businesses to his sons, Victor and Richard, and it is likely that he has not decided just what mischief he intends to make.

If, as he insists, his 3 per cent stake in Jardine is just an investment then he has already made some £40 million paper profit on the speculation alone. If he is still musing, he can command some tight property deals from the brothers with the unspoken threat of a hostile bid looming.

Or, he could leave them to the communist jungle for a few years, and see how they enjoy running a living museum of capitalism in a country where they will never again be part of the ruling elite.

Why the next bull market will be bonds



ANTHONY HARRIS

This column argues that when the bull market finally tops out (probably, but not certainly, quite soon) the bond market will take up the running. This may sound silly. How can there possibly be a bull market in bonds when we are told not only that markets may crash any day, but that inflation is rising, and that the next rise in money rates is only a matter of time? Simply because all interest rates — long, medium and short — are still unreasonably high by historic standards. What went up hasn't come down, and gravity rules in the end.

The only trouble with historic standards is that you need a long memory to know what they are; and my own memory, a longish one, has only now been jogged by Ian Shepherdson, HSBC's man in New York. (His bullish forecast is for US Treasury bonds, but his reasoning ought to apply, broadly, to Britain too.) It is supported partly by a chart that puts current long yields into perspective. Long yields have fallen by about half since their peak in the early 1980s, but what you may be asking? Am I supposed to get excited about a prospective profit of, say, 50

per cent if I hold bonds for the next decade, when equities deliver as much every few months? Of course not; but this is really where we came in. The New Era is no longer an eccentric minority

view: most analysts expect inflation to stay down. But the reason why this has not much excited the bond market up to now is that the equity market has been so irresistibly tempting.

That will change if and when the crash comes: the bond bull market will be kicked off by the "flight into quality", which is the mark of every financial panic.

Should you simply buy a US bond fund, or could all this be applied to Britain too? I believe it could — once we get over the twitting caused by the building society windfalls, and by a rise in petrol prices which is actually deflationary, whatever the headline figures say. The only trouble for the private saver is income tax; but a switch into bonds now, and a switch of those bonds into a personal equity plan next year, looks very safe.

We may never quite get back to the golden age of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Ready to be counted over joblessness?

Philip Bassett looks at a tricky decision for ministers over moves to improve the credibility of unemployment data

The Government will today announce the latest unemployment figures, which ministers hope will see a new fall in the numbers out of work and claiming benefit. But behind the announcement, Labour is shaping up to a tough decision: how unemployment should be counted in the future.

In opposition, Labour was vociferous in attacking the Government over unemployment — partly on its record (jobs being lost, people going out of work) but partly, too, on how those trends were recorded, or "fiddled". Labour claimed that the Conservative Government had changed the basis of the unemployment figures so many times the statistics were all but meaningless.

So when Labour took office, David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, faced a dilemma. Having insisted that unem-

ployment was higher than the Conservatives had maintained, would the new administration now demand that a more accurate measure of unemployment be used, and risk accusations that unemployment went "up" under Labour?

Blunkett's team is ready to decide.

The Government's keynote Welfare to Work jobs programme makes the decision even more important if unemployment is not accurately measured as Labour defines it, then the success (or otherwise) of the New Deal will not be demonstrable.

Officially, unemployment is calculated in two ways. First, the numbers out of work and claiming benefit are

counted every month. This largely administrative check then forms the monthly "claimant count" (CC), which, adjusted to take account of seasonal variations, is used as the main measure of unemployment.

Secondly, every three months the Government carries out the Labour Force Survey (LFS) — a sample survey of 60,000 households, asking detailed questions about labour market activity. Unemployment is measured to United Nations' International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployment, as it is known) standards. ILO unemployment follows a similar pattern to the CC measure, but at a consistently higher

level, especially as economic recovery has progressed.

What Labour ministers now have to decide is whether they will shift to a monthly LFS, widely regarded as a more accurate measure of real unemployment, or in Government will shrug off the position they held in opposition because of the cost of making the move. Unemployment analysts regarded it as significant when last month ministers and officials laid such stress on the ILO data that they presented and explained it before the claimant count.

Whitehall officials are readying a set of changes that will alter significantly how the City, business and

others receive and absorb the unemployment figures. First, the Government will combine the CC and ILO data into one release of information; secondly, the presentation will focus on key data, rather than trying to present figures on every single labour market measure; and thirdly, the Government presentation will try to give a coherent picture of the labour market, rather than just a series of unconnected data sets. Officials are unsure as yet about how far down this path to go. The Office for National Statistics is considering providing its own statistical, rather than economic or political, view.

The decision will be seen by users of government data as a test of Labour's commitment to statistical and economic legitimacy. There is an opportunity to restore political, business and public credibility to data vital to measuring economic performance.

Soft teeth

PROFESSIONAL associations, doncha just love 'em? Remember when the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales fined Richard Stone and Michael Jordan, £1,000 each for not declaring conflicts of interest when they took on the Polly Peck insolvency.

Well the Insolvency Practitioners Association is now showing its teeth. It has been looking into the role of Peter Phillips, the liquidator of Robert Maxwell's estate who ran up £1.62 million of fees for his firm, Buchler Phillips, and Nabarro Nathanson, the law

firm, while recovering just £1.67 million of assets. This was the situation described by Lord Justice Ferris as "profoundly shocking".

So what does the IPA have to say about it? "We have previously, at Mr Phillips' own request, investigated the conduct of the receiver in this case," said David Sape, IPA president, "and have found that he acted entirely appropriately."

Sape, adds helpfully, that the IPA is happy to look at the case again. Don't call us, we'll call you.

• GRAHAM HOOPER, the investment director of Chase de Vere Investments, the independent financial adviser, has found a novel way to predict stock market movements.

Hooper recently bought 38 Jacob sheep to keep the grass in his paddock down. But he has noticed that the sheep also show a surprising talent for indicating whether the FTSE 100 index will rise or fall. "If the sheep droppings are damp, I've noticed the market tends to fall, and if they are dry, it's likely to go up," he says.

On Monday morning, when the FTSE dropped nearly 65 points, the droppings were showing definite signs of sogness. But what about the



market's bounce back later on in the day? Hooper says: "The sheep missed me. There was a dew on the ground."

Pulling away

DOWN in Cleckheaton (that's near Bradford, by the way), something is stirring. John Ross, chief executive of Charles Sydney, the posh car dealership, has suddenly departed, taking a £130,000 payoff in his pocket. No explanation, nothing, apart from an interesting rumour in the motor trade about a merger with Symer Group, the Nottingham BMW franchise headed by Frank Symer, the former British sports car champion.

According to Raymond Edwards, the executive chairman of Charles Sydney, there is

nothing in these rumours, and the departure of Ross was entirely amicable and Edwards and Ross are the "best of friends". Apparently the business was not big enough for the both of them. Well, Cleckheaton is a small town.

• THE Office of National Statistics has realised what sorceresses all over the country knew already — that the football season is starting earlier. Increases in season ticket prices are now included in August inflation figures, not those for September. Given that the cost of going to a top flight game has gone up more than 220 per cent in the past decade, this could explain why this month's inflation figure is the highest for two years.

No old pals

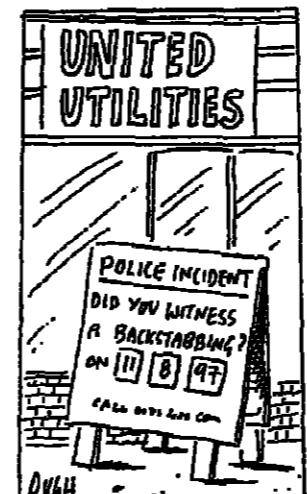
OF COURSE at the moment the bedside reading of all responsible directors of public companies is the report of the Hampel committee on corporate governance. Brian Evans, the chief executive of Wyevale Garden Centres, has clearly taken it to heart, as I found perusing the small ads.

Under "business opportunities" it emerges that Wyevale is on the lookout for two non-executive directors. "I know it's unusual, but why not?" Evans tells me. "But with all this corporate governance asking for independent non-execu-

tive, we thought we'd get away from the old pals act and cast our net a bit wider." He advertised in "business opportunities" not "situations vacant" because Wyevale wants people who already have jobs.

It will save a few bob on headhunters' fees too.

JASON NISSE



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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INDEX											
Sec	Buy	+/-	Yd	Sec	Buy	+/-	Yd	Sec	Buy	+/-	Yd
For 48 les Green (ads)				Pacific Portfolios	165.65	+ 1.20	0.67	Income Plus	651.20	+ 5.20	3.97
AVIA EQUITY & UNIT TRUST MGRS				US Equity	113.53	+ 1.20	0.75	Income Plus	651.90	+ 5.20	3.97
General Acc	622.96	+ 1.50	2.15	Am Amer Fund	496.00	+ 1.20	0.50	Income Plus	652.50	+ 5.20	3.97
US Growth Acc	881.80	+ 2.50	2.15	Am Amer Fund	51.97	+ 0.50	0.72	Income Plus	653.20	+ 5.20	3.97
Higher Inv Acc	600.88	+ 0.80	1.20	CRF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS				Income Plus	653.90	+ 5.20	3.97
Higher Inv Acc	954.50	+ 1.50	2.45	Am Amer Fund	919.38	+ 2.10	1.71	Income Plus	654.50	+ 5.20	3.97
Higher Inv Acc	522.70	+ 1.50	2.45	Am Amer Fund	918.18	+ 2.10	1.71	Income Plus	655.10	+ 5.20	3.97
Global Inv Acc	101.80	+ 1.00	2.45	Am Amer Fund	169.94	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	655.70	+ 5.20	3.97
Global Inv Acc	100.00	+ 0.50	2.45	Am Amer Fund	169.61	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	656.30	+ 5.20	3.97
High Risk Inv	556.40	+ 4.50	2.45	CRF CHARITY FUNDS				Income Plus	656.90	+ 5.20	3.97
Europe Inv	421.40	+ 4.50	2.45	Am Amer Fund	171.75	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	657.50	+ 5.20	3.97
East Equi	112.00	+ 1.00	2.25	Am Amer Fund	903.03	+ 2.00	1.75	Income Plus	658.10	+ 5.20	3.97
East Equi	112.00	+ 1.00	2.25	Am Amer Fund	171.98	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	658.70	+ 5.20	3.97
East Equi	112.00	+ 1.00	2.25	Am Amer Fund	172.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	659.30	+ 5.20	3.97
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0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	670.10	+ 5.20	3.97
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0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	674.90	+ 5.20	3.97
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0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	680.30	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	680.90	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	681.50	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	682.10	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	682.70	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	683.30	+ 5.20	3.97
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0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85	Income Plus	690.50	+ 5.20	3.97
0171 211 711				Am Amer Fund	170.00	+ 1.50	0.85</td				

Daniel Rosenthal reports on the 40-year-old LP recordings that are coming back to haunt their now-famous casts



Trevor Nunn (right) with Peter Woodthorpe recording *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the ADC



Ian Holm (left) and Richard Johnson at the 1970 re-recording of *Othello* for better sound quality

Long playing, long lasting Shakespeare

Never in the field of audio drama was so much recorded by so many over such a long period.

In 1957, the British Council decided to finance the production of unabridged LP versions of the complete works of Shakespeare. These were to be records which could be studied and enjoyed across the globe.

Dr George "Dadie" Rylands, fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and passionate advocate of clear, precise verse-speaking, was hired as director, with the late Harley Ullis, director of the Argo record label, as his technical supervisor. By 1964, the pair had co-ordinated the recording of all 37 plays, released on Argo without so much as an "Ay" or "Ol" missing. *Hamlet* and *Richard III* weighed in at five LPs each. *The Comedy of Errors* was a snug double album with "bonus" sonnets on the fourth side.

Next week PolyGram, which holds the rights to the Argo Shakespeare, will begin a major reissue of the recordings, with *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (the best-selling Shakespeares in print) re-released on double cassette. More titles will follow in 1998.

The cast lists reveal how Rylands used Cambridge undergraduates who had appeared at the Arts Theatre in his Marlowe Society productions (among them Ian McKellen, Derek Jacobi and Trevor Nunn) alongside some of British theatre's most illustrious names. John Gielgud and Peggy Ashcroft starred in *Much Ado*. Michael Hordern was Prospero.

Here, Rylands and some of his former colleagues recall a marathon venture which, according to PolyGram's Alex Mitchison, would today be "impossibly expensive".

■

Dadie Rylands
Ninety-five in October, he took numerous Argo roles, including Angelo in Measure for Measure.

"Our first 'studio' was the Amateur Dramatic Club (ADC) theatre in Cambridge, which was far from sound-proof. Whenever a dog barked or a plane flew overhead we had to go back and re-record. It was enormously frustrating. When we moved to the Decca studios in north London, in

1960, things became more straightforward.

"For me, it was absolutely essential that the recordings should be unabridged, to give teachers of Shakespeare the *real* text. I found it very difficult to get what I wanted in those plays which were hackneyed, such as *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, or unfamiliar to the public, such as *Troilus and Cressida*.

"The sessions at the ADC were very civilised — some of the professional actors were happy to accept half a case of claret instead of a fee.

"Nevertheless, the recordings were very well reviewed and, I hope, very much enjoyed. I remain proud of them because they represented such a tremendous undertaking."

■ **Peter Orr**

Deputy director of the British Council's recorded sound unit in the Sixties, edited the recordings and acted.

"The sessions at the ADC were very civilised — some of the professional actors were happy to accept half a case of claret instead of a fee.

"We recorded everything out of sequence, arranging the schedule according to which professionals were available on particular days. We worked on *Richard III* and the three parts of *Henry VI* concurrently because they share common characters. This left one very distinguished actor totally confused. In the midst of all these Roses battles, he came up to Dadie and said: 'Please could you tell me which side I'm on?'

■ **Margaret Drabble**
Novelist, was Imogen for the Argo Cymbeline, a few months after playing the part for the Marlowe Society.

"I had a very bad stammer as a young person and it came back more severely during the recording of *Cymbeline* than it ever did on stage.

"In the theatre I learnt to sidestep it. But perhaps because for a record you don't have the 'high' of live performance and are concentrating so much on your voice, I found the recording very difficult.

"My own voice sounds so awful to me that I've never dared listen to the *Cymbeline* record."

■ **Prunella Scales**
Actor, was in her early twenties when she took several parts, including Cordelia, and Rosaline in Love's Labour's Lost.

"I had been acting professionally for about six years when I auditioned for Dadie in London. At that stage, directors tended to cast me as a 'character actress' — which

simply means you are not pretty enough to play the romantic leads. So it was good to be offered the chance to play Cordelia and Rosaline.

"I learnt an enormous amount from Dadie, and from actors like William Devlin [who played Lear] and Irene Worth [Cleopatra]."

■ **Richard Johnson**
Actor and producer, played Othello and Antony.

"Dadie was a genial master of ceremonies at the recordings. He gave us general notes, we ran the play through a couple of times and then just got on with recording it.

"Ian Holm was excellent as Iago [when the original *Othello* was re-recorded in 1970 for better sound quality], very sly and insinuating. I think we were rather a good duo, and have always regretted that I never played *Othello* on stage."

"I greet the reissues with a certain trepidation because the style of acting is bound to have changed. That's the thing with recordings and films: you are preserved rather like a fly in

in a jar and it's not usually a very exciting spectacle."

■ **Trevor Nunn**
Incoming National Theatre director, played several parts, including Gower in Henry V.

"I had to do Gower with virtually no rehearsal. He probably sounded as though he had come to the battlefield straight from school — which is 19. I more or less had."

"As an undergraduate, we found it hard to believe that we were suddenly among very good professional actors, contributing to how scenes were to be interpreted. To work with someone like Irene Worth was a gift beyond price."

"The recordings continue to demonstrate everything that is good about presenting, with clarity and attention to detail, texts that have been revered for centuries. They are superbly spoken, but they were not acted to the point where there is revelation or surprise."

■ *The Argo Shakespeares are re-released on August 19 on PolyGram Spoken Word, price £7.99 per play*

Problem left unsolved

A director who is able to express perception through invention can show this "problem" play making almost perfect sense. Fairytale simplicity married to human complexity is never going to prove an ideal match, but more can be done to persuade us that the attempt is worth the try than Irina Brook manages in this production, setting off from here on a four-month national tour.

The fantasy element comes from Helena, poor daughter of a dead physician, who dares to love her benefactor's son, Bertram, and claims him as a reward after curing the king of France of his fits. Reality contributes Bertram's outrage at being so allotted. He goes off with his false friend Parolles to the Tuscan wars.

Whether Helena follows in disguise, tricks him into going to bed with her, and all ends well.

The crucial role is Helena, and the crucial relationship that between Bertram and Parolles. The latter has, to continue something which young Bertram relishes but most cungrow, the former must show herself to be as worthy, virtuous, beautiful and all the other superlatives that her supporters continually tell us she is.

Brook decides to set the play in an African market. Traders display wooden toys, hardware, leather goods, and into this busy world two white women wander, looking for souvenirs. Merriment ensues. Then one of the traders suggests they tell a story, like Mickey Rooney in the movies: right here And off we go.

Africa supplies too little to justify its presence. There is drumming, and a metal bowl struck sonorously with a rod. Helena's "miracle" cure is shown in shadow play behind a sheet. Magical arm-waving seems to be what does the trick, and Rachel Pickup's arms are remarkably elegant.

In the early scenes her speech is intelligently varied yet her displays of ardour, intensity leaning forward, turn hers into a curiously old-fashioned performance. By contrast, she is almost blushing with Michael Greco's Parolles in their banter about virginity, ending the scene sitting legs astride on his groin. Some may say this justifies calling her "dear perfection", but it turns her into a sexual cheat.

Lafer's mockery of Parolles goes for nothing, and too many of the lines are spoken without discernible knowledge of their meaning. After the achievements of Brook's last two productions this is a disappointment.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Concerto but Christian Tetzlaff, whose intense, almost fevered tone sounded oddly antique against the rounder, orchestral sound, drove it harder and faster. Plunging headlong through the first-movement cadenza, he never relaxed into the broad melody that follows. And though he played an electrifying allegro, one missed intonation in the adagio, and most of all, rhythmic subtlety.

It was a tall order to play a Beethoven symphony the night after Gardiner's riveting performance of the Ninth. But Saraste delivered a most enjoyable *Eroica*, notable for its melting horn solos and dead centre tuning despite the sweltering hall.

HELEN WALLACE

A nest of the avant garde, surely? "I don't really think about definitions. I have trouble enough finding out who and what I want to be." Do his Nigerian origins make a difference? "I'm sure it's all in there somewhere. But so is Manchester. I did go on an art scholarship to Zimbabwe recently, and found I felt pretty affected. I saw these extraordinary patterns of coloured dots in some of the early cave paintings, and that set me off."

That places the dots. How about those brown lumps on the surface of his paintings? "Oh, the elephant dung. I dunno, I had a lot pointed out to me in Zimbabwe and somehow found it inspiring."

Ambitions: "To go on living one day at a time, enjoying myself with what I do, and hoping that comes across to the rest of the world."

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Mondrian at the Tate

Mondrian: Nature to Abstraction

From the Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

26 July - 30 November 1997

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GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

CHRIS OFILI

Age: 28
In demand: Painters are back in vogue again, and he is very much a painter, turning people into dazzling patterns of coloured dots. When still a student at Chelsea he won a prize at the Whitworth Young Contemporaries. He has since won a following in mixed shows (most recently *About Vision: New British Painting in the 1990s* at MOMA, Oxford), has shown solo in New York, London and (next) Berlin, will be in the RA's *Sensation* show, and is preparing for a big new touring museum show early next year.

Does he see art as essentially visual? "Of course. If you go into the National Gallery

you start by asking what

the *Wilton Diptych* is."

The *Wilton Diptych*? "Don't

you think it's the most

beautiful thing? It almost

melts on your tongue. Where

can you get more pleasure

than that?"

So he believes art should

give pleasure? "What's the

point of making it if it

doesn't? I want to do some-

thing which is fun for me,

and I hope will be fun for

other people too. Serious as

hell, of course. But not

boring."

Beginnings: Born in Man-

chester, he wanted to be a

furniture designer, but as

soon as he embarked on the

foundation course and

realized he didn't know what

he wanted to do,

he became a painter.

Artistic influences: "I

was influenced by

unrestrictive teachers who

believed students should

start by finding their own

way. Then Chisenhale and the

Royal College, prizes and

exposure. He found a

London dealer, Victoria

Miro, for himself, toting his

work to fairs.



JPY/13/20

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Problem
left
unsolved
A

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

ARTS EDINBURGH 31

Opera to please the balletomane; Tippett and Tharp honoured; too many tricks spoil the Bard. Plus Festival art shows

DONALD COOPER

A fun night out with a frog in drag

Say, we could do the show right here in this bar! This is the kick-off point of Mark Morris's production of Rameau's *ballet bouffon* for the Royal Opera, and why not? The Prologue is after all set in a vineyard and subtitled *The Birth of Comedy*, and, while detached from the main action, shows assorted low-lives planning to invent a new kind of entertainment, which is indeed do.

Platée (1745) is not Great Art, but in its chic sophistication, inconsequential heartlessness, it is the progenitor of a peculiarly Gallic form of the theatre. Rossini (*Comte Ory*), Offenbach, Chabrier and Poulenc are among Rameau's offspring.

Adrienne Lobel's beautifully designed 1940-ish bar, the sort of place where the wearing of trousers is not obligatory, gradually fills up with reassuringly recognisable types — a sailor, a policeman, a drunk (*Thespis*), a deviously tipsy showgirl, Fifth Avenue types stumping (*Mormus* and *Thalia*), and someone called "Dyke" (I thought that was a word not used in polite society nowadays). We are in the world of Jerome Robbins's *On the Town*, and the milieus of 18th and 20th-century dance are neatly combined.

And dance is what it's all about: at first it seemed a pity for the Royal Opera chorus to be confined to the pit while Morris's 16 dancers enthusiastically mime their words; but the wit, the freshness, the sheer zaniness of his choreography soon sweep doubts away. The action of both Prologue and opera proper

OPERA

breaks off at the slightest excuse, with the words "on danse" and, since Rameau was surely the first great composer of dance music, it's hard to cavil.

The airy textures, the rhythms, the forward impulse

must set even the most recalcitrant operatic toe tapping, certainly as delivered by the ROH Orchestra under Nicho-

las McGegan's hyper-infec-

tiously sprightly direction.

A terrarium at the back of the bar links Prologue to opera, which shows Jupiter pretending to fancy the vain, hideously ugly marsh nymph Platée in order to teach the pathologically jealous Juno a lesson. Here Morris and his costume designer Isaac Mizrahi let their fantasy run riot. I particularly enjoyed duets for turtles and snakes to Rameau's *musette* Minuet, and a routine for the Three Graces (one of whom is a chap) that would stop Canova in his tracks. Only the elabo-

rate dance for children and

philosophers threatened to topple over into the cuteness that is Morris's Achilles heel.

As may be gathered, the

show is not exactly over-

directed in an operatic sense —

the subsidiary singing charac-

ters are left to get on with it —

but at its centre is a magical,

beautifully sung performance of

the drag title role by Jean-Paul Fouchécourt.

The diminutive French ten-

or's make-up and costume are

masterly: he's a little green,

pear-shaped frog in a diaphano-

us tea-gown barely concealing

a pink belly-button, modest

rope of pearls and

longnose dangling from

diamanté bracelet. With huge

frog feet and hands, Fouchécourt manages to pre-

serve the dignity of Alastair

Sin and the chaste flirtatious-

ness of Jack Lemmon on

similar assignments. In a

word, a classic travesty imper-

sonation, and the moment

when the joke is revealed, his

frock is torn off and he hops

back into the marsh in genu-

inely shocking, a momentary

passing cloud in this hilariously

heartless entertainment.

It's Fouchécourt's show, but

François Le Roux (Jupiter),

Diana Montague (Juno) and

Mark Padmore (Thespis and

Mercury) sing idiomatic

and clearly, their words al-

ways audible, and Nicole

Tibbles (La Folie) has great

fun with her parody of an

Italian coloratura aria, hurl-

ing out top Ds and even an E

like fireworks. A delightfully

civilised, undemanding eve-

ning, sponsored by TSB Bank

Scotland.

RODNEY MILNES



Mark Padmore (in blazer) and the excellent Jean-Paul Fouchécourt (right) with various Satyrs in Mark Morris's production of Rameau's *Platée*

Tippett with too many strings attached

THE Edinburgh Festival does not have a great record as far as new music is concerned. It can, however, take legitimate pride in bringing two of the most successful of Sir Michael Tippett's scores into the world — the *Fantasia Concertante* on a Theme of Corelli in 1953, and the *Concerto for Orchestra* in 1963. So it was good thinking, in this fiftieth birthday year, to link those two pieces with *A Child of our Time* in an all-Tippett concert.

Or so it seemed until the public demonstrated that it was not enormously interested in the event, and until we heard what Richard Armstrong and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra made of the two

Edinburgh scores. Neither the *Fantasia Concertante* nor the *Concerto for Orchestra* is easy to perform, least of all when they must share rehearsal time both with each other and with a big choral work. On the other hand, the problems of balancing and blending the complexities of the string counterpoint in the *Fantasia Concertante* are well known and should surely not result in a performance that sounds as though the composer did not know his job.

The more clearly defined melodic shapes and textural profiles in the first movement of the *Concerto for Orchestra* encouraged a correspondingly more convincing performance from the RSNO wind, harp and

THEATRE

Measure for Measure

Royal Lyceum

I did, and it struck me as the

sort of attention-getting yet

undeveloped touch that heralds a tricksy, tendentious

production.

As it turns out, the news

from the Lyceum is not that

bad. Nevertheless, Braunschweig the director is in

partner form than Braunschweig the designer.

The twin successes of a slow,

over-long production, spon-

sored by the Bank of Scotland,

are Brennan's Angelo and the

nun he tries to seduce, Lise

Stevenson's Isabella. He is a

neat, suspiciously correct

young man who quickly re-

places diffidence with the

hardness of power; she makes

you believe in the energetic,

fiery woman beneath the wan-

looking novice.

I have never seen more

effective treatment of the nota-

tioally difficult scene where

Isabella inadvertently be-

witches the unself-aware An-

gelo. Something about this

paolo, intense girl, listening so

carefully as he engages her in

argument, touches the intel-

lectually underused heart.

The words "pray you, begone",

usually just a curt dismissal of

her plea on behalf of her

condemned brother, becomes a

protest against a sexual pull

he does not care to feel.

Suddenly their faces are

inches apart. Suddenly her

hands, innocently extended,

are near his lips, and their

smell hits his nose. The erotic

tension is unacknowledged

but palpable — and dramati-

cally as useful as it could be.

Nothing else in the evening

is as subtly done, and some

things are decidedly unsatisfactory.

There are silly jokes, such as

having Isabella's mother super-

ior react to the offstage sound

of Danny Sapani's Lucia as if

she were going into orgasm.

The mix of costumes — Elbow

as PC Plod, an FT-reading

Lucio in white suit and exotic

fur coat. Pompey as a blend of

Druil and Greek philosopher,

the rest of the Vietnamese riff-raff

in Jacobean garb — is distract-

ing. But the real problem is

Jim Hooper's Duke.

True, the character's con-

duct does not stand up to

modern psychological or politi-

cal scrutiny. What sort of

prince would disguise himself

as a friar and watch his deputy

reactivate the draconian laws

he has ignored? But this does

not mean that a man

described as unusually tem-

perate can be reduced to a

narcissist who takes glee in

playing barmy games with his

subjects. Shakespeare's Duke

has two serious purposes: to

expose Puritan hypocrisy and

to show that mercy can coexist

with justice. Here we feel the

full gravity of neither.

BENEDICT

NIGHTINGALE

Patchy Puritanism stolen by scenery

FOR his first production in Britain, the French director-designer Stéphane Braunschweig has certainly come up with a striking set. It is a vast timbered drum that creaks round to reveal a confusion of splintery platforms and dark, twisted staircases. Beneath are spidery corridors and beside them is a reproduction of Masaccio's *Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden*.

That is an apt image, given

that *Measure for Measure*

concerns a Puritan attempt to

punish disobedient lovers. In-

deed, the set as a whole suits a

play in which there is plenty of

watching, spying and sly

manipulation.

But did I also see the Puritan

EDINBURGH
The Royal Opera gives its second performance tonight at the International Festival of a new production of Rossini's *Osmane et Domina* and choreographed by Mark Morris (see review, page 31). With Jean-Paul Foucaud in the title role, David Mather and Sophie Stevenson. Sung in French with English surtitles (Edinburgh Festival Festival, 7.15pm).

In a change to the scheduled programme at 11am in the Queen's Hall, the baritone Olaf Palm (see review, page 31) and the David Mather Ensemble sing Brahms' *Songs and Dances*. Sung in French with English surtitles (Edinburgh Festival Festival, 7.15pm).

The Festival's extensive number of exhibitions includes *A New Look at 1947* – a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Christian Dior's "New Look" (10am-5pm, Mon-Sat, until 16th August; Price Gallery, 0131-650 2211). There is also an exhibition of oil paintings and watercolours by George Hendon (10am-5pm, Mon-Sat, until 16th August; Price Gallery, 0131-650 2211).

The Festival's mammoth line-up includes National Youth Theatre (10am-5pm, Mon-Sat, until 16th August; Price Gallery, 0131-650 2211). Which transports the story of Al Baba and the Forty Thieves to a fast-moving, slick-talking 1930s Chicago (Assembly Rooms, 10am-3pm, Mon-Sat, until 16th August; Price Gallery, 0131-650 2211).

There is also an exhibition of oil

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian MacKay

Peter Pan author – at Southgate (Venue 82, 4.30pm, £10). Belinda Clifton is performing the musical *Peter Pan* throughout the festival period (Venue 189, 2.30pm/7pm) and C performs Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at C, Overgate (Venue 189, 7.30pm, £10). Prince box office (0131-221 5138; telcos: 0131-226 5257; information).

LONDON
BBC PROMS: The BBC Symphony Orchestra under chief conductor Andrew Davis performs George Benjamin's *Rhapsody for the Flat Horizon* and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*.

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EDINBURGH
Natalia Makarova is performing at Chichester

and the International Violin Virtuosi returns to the Pitlochry to perform Bartók's Violin Concerto No 2. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212). Tonight, 7.30pm. £5.

THE BRITISHE THE COMPLETE WORD OF GOD (0171-589 8212) Another company from the London Shakespeare Company, cast to put the fun back into fundamentalism. Gladstone, Shakesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-589 8205). Opens tonight, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; matin Wed, 8pm, Sat, 6pm.

ELSEWHERE
BBC PROMS: The BBC Symphony Orchestra under chief conductor Andrew Davis performs George Benjamin's *Rhapsody for the Flat Horizon* and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*.

CHICHESTER Natalia Makarova plays the dancing swan in Swan's odd comedy, *Misbehaviour*. Frank Hauser's cast includes Sheila Reid, Joss Ackland and Timothy West. The Swan, Chichester Park (01243 761312). Preview begins tonight, 7.30pm. Opens August 19, 7.45pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; matin Wed, 8pm, Sat, 6pm.

LONDON GALLERIES

Design Museum: *The Power of Exotic Design* (0171-378 0056) ... Welsh Pianist Stephen Cox (0181-693 2854) ... *Paintings of Australia and Great Britain* (0171-587 9899) ... *London 1907* (London 1907) ... *Country Children's Art: Home-landscapes* ... Art by Refugees Children of the former Yugoslavia (0171-431 2300) ... *Nationalist Sound and the British Isles* ... *Changemakers: Surface as a Source of Image* (0171-603 1123) ... *Portef*: Summer Show (0171-439 0708) ... Royal Academy: *Ringhauer Images of Mist, Rain, Moon, Snow* (0171-439 9377).

EDINBURGH
Natalia Makarova is performing at Chichester

Who dares wins in feast of virtuosity

Just before the first jazz concert in the newly opened Theatre Brychening, the veteran drummer Jake Hanna walked around the stage clapping his hands. "Great acoustics," was the verdict, amply proved in his set that followed with pianist Ralph Sutton and friends. Again and again over the weekend, the theatre showed its suitability for the gentler styles of jazz, like Sutton's small group, or the delicate gypsy guitarist Pany Laferia.

Habitués may miss the cracking Guildhall, but now Britain's most diverse and enjoyable jazz festival has a comfortable modern auditorium alongside its vast Market Hall, the quiet intimacy of Christ College, and the various outdoor stages.

Sutton set the mood, for this year's event was as much dominated by pianists and trumpeters as last years was by tenor saxophonists. The

best moments came from those players of either instrument who were prepared to take risks. So, splendid as it was to hear the veteran bop pianist Hank Jones in company with the vibraphonist Milt Jackson, their urban, polished set lacked any of the drama that came from the younger, more exploratory players like Kenny Werner.

Green has had more than his share of playing slick, urbane sets with the singer Betty Carter and bassist Ray Brown. But once more leading his own trio he gave himself more room to stretch out, and he tried some genuine experiments with pace, metre and timbre in pieces such as his *Montezuma* and *Eisenhower*, where the bizarre contrast implied by two adjacent Californian street names carried over into his musical language.

When the saxophonist Joe Lovano was injured just before the festival, his last-minute replacement with Werner's trio was the Temessee tenorist Bennie Wallace, and their first meeting was on stage at Brecon. Wallace, as the bizarre contrast implied by two adjacent Californian street names carried over into his musical language.

When the saxophonist Joe Lovano was injured just before the festival, his last-minute replacement with Werner's trio was the Temessee tenorist Bennie Wallace, and their first meeting was on stage at Brecon. Wallace, as the bizarre contrast implied by two adjacent Californian street names carried over into his musical language.

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

Court of Appeal

Subcontractor can recover award

Co-Operative Wholesale Society Ltd (trading as CWS Engineering Group) v Birsie Construction Ltd, formerly Peter Birsie Ltd

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Rook and Lord Justice Phillips

Judgments July 9

An arbitrator's final award in a building dispute against the employer and in favour of the contractor, entitled a subcontractor, on the liability of the contractor to a nominated subcontractor.

Disputes arose with the employer, College Lids Ltd, and in March 1995 the arbitrator, having heard evidence, found that itemised claims by the contractor of some 15 million were proved. His award included the subcontractor's claims of £32,942 in respect of measured works and £79,625 for loss and expense.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by the contractor, Birsie Construction Ltd, from the order of Judge John Hicks QC, in June 1995, that the subcontractor, Co-Operative Wholesale Society Ltd, could rely on an arbitrator's award to recover from the contractor sums due for measured works and for loss and expense.

Mr Vivian Ramsey QC and Mr Jonathan Lee for the contractor; Mr Richard Ferreyhough QC and Mr Robert J. Evans for the subcontractor.

LODGE JUSTICE PHILLIPS

Commercial solution to rent review problem in lease

Dukeminister (Ebbgate House One) Ltd v Somerset Property Co Ltd (formerly Gateway Properties Ltd)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Henry and Lord Justice Swinton Thomas

Judgment July 29

A commercial solution had to be found to a problem posed by a rent review provision in a lease of warehouse premises that was stated to operate by reference to a valuation of notional premises but which failed to specify where those notional premises were to be situated. In the absence of clear words the provision was to be construed so as to produce a valuation that was not substantially higher or lower than any that could reasonably have been intended.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment so held allowing an appeal by Somerset Properties Co Ltd, the tenant for a term of 25 years at an annual rent subject to five yearly reviews of £65,000. Future rent was to be ascertained by reference to "notional premises" defined as "a warehouse unit within a 35-mile radius of Ross-on-Wye".

The difficulty was that that definition did not specify where within the 35-mile radius the notional premises were to be situated.

The judge explained that "the circle described by that radius includes areas which show a wide variety in rental levels". He went on to hold that such notional premises were to mean a location comparable to the site of the premises in Ross-on-Wye.

But there was no justification for the wording of the judge's definition. What then was to be done?

The judgment of Lord Justice

said that the appeal, brought pursuant to section 239 of the Arbitration Act 1979, required the court to construe two JCT standard form contracts to determine the effect of an award in an arbitration between employer and contractor on the liability of the contractor to a nominated subcontractor.

The appeal was the main contractor for the construction between 1987 and 1988 of a shopping centre at Dukeminister under the 1983 edition of the JCT standard form contract.

Disputes arose with the employer, College Lids Ltd, and in March 1995 the arbitrator, having heard evidence, found that itemised claims by the contractor of some 15 million were proved. His award included the subcontractor's claims of £32,942 in respect of measured works and £79,625 for loss and expense.

Had the employer honoured the award, the contractor would have had two sums to the subcontractor. Unhappily the employer went into liquidation without honouring the award.

In those circumstances the subcontractor claimed to be entitled without further proof to recover the amounts from the contractor in the arbitration under the subcontract. Under the JCT form, the contractor agreed to carry out

contract works, which included works which were to be subcontracted to subcontractors nominated by the architect.

While the contractor was contractually liable to perform those works, and entitled to be paid for them, the contractual scheme set out to insulate him from responsibility for them in practice. That was achieved by provisions making the rights and duties of the contractor and the subcontractor back-to-back in relation to the subcontract works and which placed the subcontractor under the instructions of the architect rather than the main contractor.

Lord Justice Dunn had given a helpful summary of the contractual scheme in Northern Regional Health Authority v Derek Crouch Construction Co Ltd [1984] 1 QB 644, 661-62.

It was the contractor's case that it was only liable to make payments to the subcontractor under the subcontract (¶ 10) pursuant to a certificate by the architect (clause 11); (ii) where the contractor's fault had *impeded* the regular progress of the subcontract works (clause 8(c)(ii)); (iii) pursuant to clause 8(c)(i) and 12 requiring the contractor to account for benefits obtained from the employer that were applicable to

the subcontractor.

The judge in considering whether the arbitrator's decision was binding in the arbitration under the subcontract held that the award had been honoured by the contractor. The contractor would have been bound to pay the subcontractor the latter's share. It had to follow, he said, that the contractor was under the same liability even though the award had not been honoured: the obligation to make the payment could not be conditional on the contractor first being paid by the employer. There was, the judge said "no such condition and the main contractor takes the risk of the employer's insolvency".

Mr Ramsey contended that the contractual scheme was designed to protect the contractor from exposure to the subcontractor in the event of the employer's insolvency. But it was difficult to detect any such policy when the scheme was considered as a whole.

Where one had a chain of contractual rights and liabilities, the party in the middle was normally exposed to the risk of insolvency on the part of the other parties. If the scheme set out to avoid the consequence one would expect to be clear and express provisions.

Under the main contract the subcontractor was entitled to be paid by the employer who had the subcontractor's certificate of payment issued by the architect. Thus the main contract provided for the architect's award to replace the architect's certificate.

In awarding the sums in respect of the subcontract works, the arbitrator was reviewing the certificates issued and the decisions made by the architect and awarding the sums which should have been the subject of certificates.

The subcontract made no provision for overriding the decision or certificates of the architect. But Mr Ferreyhough was correct in arguing that it was implicit that, in an arbitration under the main contract, the arbitrator made an award of a sum which should have been certified as due in respect of subcontract works, that sum fell to be treated in the subcontract as a sum duly certified, so that in that respect the award was binding in the subcontract.

The unique scheme of the JCT forms of contract and subcontract had the result that an award of an arbitrator under the main contractor directly affected the rights and liabilities of the parties to the subcontract.

Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Rook agreed.

Solicitors: Linklaters & Paines; Allen & Overy.

The judgment of Lord Justice

the subcontractor works. As it had proved impossible to enforce the award, nothing, said the contractor, was due to the subcontractor.

The judge in considering whether the arbitrator's decision was binding in the arbitration under the subcontract held that the award had been honoured by the contractor. The contractor would have been bound to pay the subcontractor the latter's share. It had to follow, he said, that the contractor was under the same liability even though the award had not been honoured: the obligation to make the payment could not be conditional on the contractor first being paid by the employer. There was, the judge said "no such condition and the main contractor takes the risk of the employer's insolvency".

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Brightman in *The Land Co Ltd v Consumers' Association Ltd* [1980] 2 EGLR 109, 112 to find a commercial solution to the problem had to be followed. And in so doing it was to be borne in mind that all rent review provisions, even those which operated by reference to a valuation of notional premises, operated in a real world and not in one of fantasy.

Thus, in the absence of clear words, notional premises could not be taken to be such as to produce a valuation, whether it be too high or too low, which could not reasonably have been intended to apply to the actual premises.

Applying that principle to the problem, there was only one intention that could be imputed to the parties that would pass the test of reasonableness.

The difference in rental values being attributable to differences in location, it could only reasonably have been intended that the notional premises should be situated in a location comparable to the site of the premises in Ross-on-Wye.

The difficulty was that that definition did not specify where within the 35-mile radius the notional premises were to be situated.

The judge explained that "the circle described by that radius includes areas which show a wide variety in rental levels". He went on to hold that such notional premises were to mean a location comparable to the site of the premises in Ross-on-Wye.

But there was no justification for the wording of the judge's definition.

What then was to be done?

The judgment of Lord Justice

Dunbar v Plant

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Phillips and Lord Justice Mummery

Judgment July 23

The rule of public policy, the forfeiture rule, which precluded a person who had unlawfully killed another from acquiring benefit in consequence of the killing, applied to offences under the Suicide Act 1961, including aiding and abetting a suicide in pursuance of a suicide pact. But where two people were driven to attempt, together, to take their lives and only one succeeded, public policy would not normally require either prosecution or forfeiture of the survivor.

It was appropriate in a case where the executors of the deceased member of the suicide pact were seeking forfeiture against the survivor to decide the issue on the basis of doing justice between the parties. The court had exercised a broad discretion having regard to all the circumstances. In the instant case, the survivor should be relieved of forfeiture of the proceeds of an insurance policy taken out by her benefit by the deceased.

The Court of Appeal so held. Lord Justice Mummery dissenting, allowing an appeal by Nanette Elizabeth Plant against an order of Judge Howarth in Preston District Registry on December 14, 1995, that £29,159.94, the proceeds of an insurance on the life of the deceased, should be forfeited to the plaintiff, the deceased's father John Arnold Dunbar, as administrator of his estate.

Mrs Plant and Mr Dunbar were engaged to be married and were living together at 28 Stanhills Avenue, Preston. She had fallen under suspicion of false accounting and theft from her employer and had been threatened with

imprisonment. Facing imminent arrest, she decided to take her own life. His reaction was that he could not face life without her. They agreed to commit suicide.

That evening they tried to kill themselves by inhaling carbon monoxide fumes, but the attempt failed. The following morning they made two attempts to hang themselves. On the second attempt, Mr Dunbar had died. Subsequently Miss Plant had cut her throat and wrists and jumped from a window but had survived.

Mr Nigel Mannew Thomas for Miss Plant; Mr Peter Crichton-Gold for the administrator.

LORD JUSTICE PHILLIPS

said Miss Plant had committed the criminal offence of aiding and abetting a suicide for the administrator.

LORD JUSTICE MUMMERY

said the deceased member of the suicide pact was seeking forfeiture against the survivor to decide the issue on the basis of doing justice between the parties. The court had exercised a broad discretion having regard to all the circumstances. In the instant case, the survivor should be relieved of forfeiture of the proceeds of an insurance policy taken out by her benefit by the deceased.

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RACING: DAY OF COMINGS AND GOINGS AS NOSEDA JOINS NEWMARKET TRAINING RANKS AFTER PURCHASING KELLEWAY'S STABLE

Head brings down curtain on notable riding career

BY CHRIS McGRATH

IN RACING, the wheel of fortune can sometimes seem to take the guise of a revolving door. Yesterday Freddie Head, six-times champion jockey of France, propelled himself into retirement — and it seems likely that, in the singular person of Paul Kelleway, he will be closely followed by one of the British turf's more idiosyncratic figures. At the same time, however, an ambitious young trainer is readying himself to be flung into the fray.

Formerly an integral part of the pioneering Godolphin venture, Jeremy Noseda has been trying his luck in the United States for the past 18 months. But he has decided, at 33, that it was "a mistake" to leave Britain; his heart, he admitted yesterday, had never done so. He will do well to match the impact made in their different fields, by his two-colour seniors.

Kelleway, who will be 58 at the end of the month, has sold his 65-box Newmarket yard to

Noseda, and is brooding unpromisingly over his options. Being the uncommon fellow he is, you cannot be entirely certain of how frivously he discusses an ambition to manage Doncaster Rovers, or sail round the world. Nor — with his string, down to barely a dozen horses — can you be sanguine when he talks about his enjoyment of golf, his friends in Spain, and the ambitions of his son, Anthony, to train (Gay's daughter, already doing so with considerable success).

"I've been in the game since I was 14, but all the knowledge I've got won't get you a glass of water," he said. "I had the opportunity to sell the yard and I've taken it, and now I've got various things I can consider. I was a jump jockey for 20 years, and I've been here for another 20. The game has changed a bit in that time."

Kelleway, most assuredly has not — most notably, his eye for a good, sharp needle among the haystacks of worthless chaff that clutter the affordably end of the blood-

stock market. "I've trained seven group one winners here, and bought them all cheap," he said. "Madam Gay cost £9,000 and was sold for £14 million. I bought Belle Genius for £8,000 and he went for half a million. Risk Me cost £20 grand and was syndicated for £4 million."

While Kelleway's apparent conviction of his own genius may be justified, it may equally explain his rejection by the establishment, which considers him too abrasive. He, needless to say, doesn't care what it thinks.

Freddie Head's struggle for acceptance was restricted only to the more suspicious among British punters. None could dispute that he has deserved a place of honour in one of French racing's most celebrated family trees.

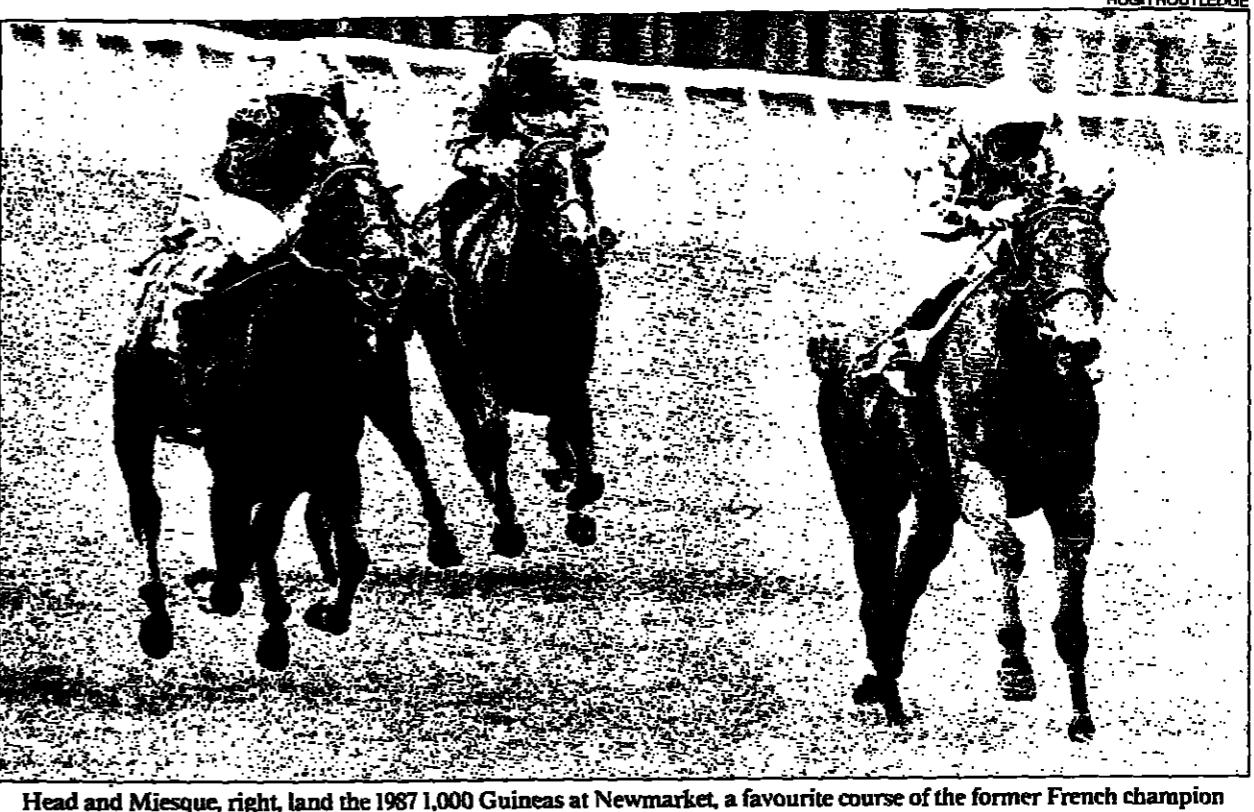
Head, 50, rode his 2,937th winner when Marathon beat Fly To The Stars in a listed race at Deauville yesterday. After finishing unplaced on his only other ride, he brought an end to his own private marathon. But he will not join

his sister, Criquette, in becoming a trainer — a sphere in which their grandfather, Willie, and father, Alec, were once without peer.

Head, who won his 27th classic on Always Loyal in the Poule d'Essai des Pouliches in May, listed Miesque, Pisto, Packer and Three Troikas as the best horses he had ridden.

Along with Ma Biche and Zino, Miesque was one of three classic winners for him in Britain, landing the 1987 1,000 Guineas at Newmarket which, interestingly, Head named as one of his favourite racecourses, along with Longchamp.

Miesque and Head rounded off that season with a brilliant win in the Breeders' Cup Mile and that great filly also won the Prix Jacques le Marois, highlight of the Deauville season, in successive years, and the same colours will be carried in Sunday's renewal by Spinning World. Like Daylami, he will be attempting to shrug off a disappointing run in Britain last time out.



Head and Miesque, right, land the 1987 1,000 Guineas at Newmarket, a favourite course of the former French champion

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FOOTBALL: OLD TRAFFORD MANAGER WARY OF INFLATED HOME MARKET

Ferguson will make Berg wait for his United debut

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

WHEN it was pointed out that he had just lavished a British record fee for a defender on Henning Berg, Martin Edwards, the Manchester United chairman, turned to the Norwegian centre half and joked that he could have got Paolo Maldini for that sort of money.

It was a light-hearted moment in a press conference that reflected United's pleasure at signing Berg, a defender of some standing, from Blackburn Rovers, but it also touched on a theme that Alex Ferguson, the United manager, returned to yesterday.

Berg brings to eight the foreign contingent at Old Trafford, but his was a domestic transfer and it was reflected in the inflated fee. While preparing for the FA Carling Premiership match against Southampton tonight, Ferguson suggested that the trend towards the import of players into the domestic game is 29 and had a bad injury, yet the fee was £5 million.

"The simple fact is that players in this country are too expensive," he said. "Go for a player with an English club and you are quoted silly money. Look at Le Saux. He is 29 and had a bad injury, yet the fee was £5 million."

"I was busier during the summer than I was during the season, because I was looking all over the world for players — but we need those players, because to compete this season we are going to need a large

squad with plenty of international experience."

Berg will begin his United career on the substitutes' bench at Old Trafford tonight as Ferguson names an unchanged team from the one that beat Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday. Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, will not be afforded such luxury, however, against Leicester City at Anfield tonight.

Liverpool will be without Neil Ruddock, who was injured against Wimbledon on Saturday and is likely to be out for two months with a knee injury. Steve Harkness will deputise in defence, but the absence of the robust centre half may prompt Evans to

return to the transfer market, with a renewed approach for Massimo Paganin, the international defender. Mark Kennedy, the Ireland winger, has asked to leave Anfield after making only 15 league appearances for Liverpool since he joined them from Millwall for £2.3 million in March 1995.

Francesco Bajano, the £1.5 million forward signed from Fiorentina, will make his debut for Derby County against Wimbledon tonight if he passes a fitness test on his injured thigh. If Bajano fails, Jim Smith, the Derby manager, is likely to keep faith with Ashley Ward and Dean Burton, who both came on as

substitutes during the 1-0 defeat against Blackburn last Saturday. The match tonight marks the first league fixture at Pride Park, Derby's new stadium.

Brian Little, the Aston Villa manager, has to decide whether to persevere with his three-pronged attack of Yorke, Collymore and Milosevic against Blackburn at Villa Park tonight, after the opening-day defeat away to Leicester. Milosevic is the player likely to stand down if Villa opt for an extra man in midfield, but Little said:

"We've become a top-five club in recent years, but have not scored enough goals to win the title. We've got to do something about it."

Blackburn are confident that they can continue their good start to the season, despite being without Tim Sherwood and Tim Flowers, both of whom are injured.

Tottenham's trip to West Ham United will become something of a family affair with Les Ferdinand, the England and Spurs striker, facing Rio Ferdinand, his cousin and the England Under-21 and West Ham defender. They have never previously played against each other.

Injuries are likely to restrict Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, to much the same side that lost to Manchester United on Sunday, while Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, is unlikely to make many changes after the 2-1 victory against Barnsley.

Walker and May are called in by Brentford

BRENTFORD have appointed

Clive Walker, the former

Woking and Chelsea striker,

and Eddie May, the former

Cardiff City manager, to take

charge of team affairs (Russell

Kempson writes). They suc-

ceeded Dave Webb, who be-

came chief executive of the

Nationwide League second

division club last week.

Neil Embleton, the Wolver-

hampton Wanderers midfield

player, has agreed personal

terms with Crystal Palace and

will join them later this week

for a fee of £2 million. David

Unsworth, the Everton de-

fender, is to join West Ham

by mid-October.

United, subject to Danny

Williamson, the West Ham

midfield player, moving to

Goodison Park.

Leicester City will pay

£500,000 to Selangor,

the Malaysian state side, for

Tony Cotter, the former West

Ham forward. Mark Kennedy,

the Liverpool forward, has

asked for a transfer after failing

to win a regular first-team place.

Dean Saunders, the Wales

striker, is ready to leave

Nottingham Forest.

Brighton are hoping to

switch their ground-sharing

to Gillingham to Millwall

by mid-October.

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CRICKET

Jayasuriya continues dominance of India

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

SANATH JAYASURIYA continued his magnificent form, scoring a scintillating 199, while Aravinda de Silva stroked his sixth century in successive Test innings on home soil as Sri Lanka made India toil in Colombo yesterday.

Sri Lanka, who were trailing by 45 runs after the first innings of the second Test, made 415 for seven in their second innings before declaring and leaving India a victory target of 373, which was reduced by 49 as their openers, Ajay Jadeja and Neovir Sidhu, made good use of the 13 overs Sri Lanka bowled in the final session of the fourth day.

Jayasuriya followed his 340 in the first Test with another monumental effort, while De Silva added another 120 runs to the 146 he scored in the first innings. The toothless India attack was treated with scant respect by this pair, who put on 218 for the third wicket at the rate of a run a minute as Sri Lanka hurtled towards a declaration.

Jayasuriya hit 21 fours and sixes from 226 balls, missing his double century by one run when he was bowled by Abey Kuruvila trying for yet another boundary. The left-hander, playing his eighth Test in 1997, became the first batsman this year to pass

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA: First Innings 202 (P A de Sene 146; D Mithun 4 for 78).
Second Innings
S T Jayasuriya c Kuruvila b Kumble 199
M S Alapattu c Jayawardene b Kumble 29
R S de Silva c Jayawardene b Kumble 120
P A de Sene c sub b Kumble 20
A Ranatunga run out 1
15 S Kaluarachana run out 1
D R Jayawardene c Jayawardene b Kumble 20
W P U J C Was not out 5
Extras 1 b 4, w 1, nb 10 17
Total (7 wkt dec) 415
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-65, 2-145, 3-383
4-389, 5-394, 6-394, 7-394, 8-394
BOWLING: Was 1-65, 2-145, 3-383, 4-389, 5-394, 6-394, 7-394, 8-394
15-1-210, Kuruvila 24-2-122, Jayawardene 25-4-158, Ganguly 3-0-180, De Silva 1-0-0
INDIA: First Innings 373 (S C Ganguly 147, S R Tendulkar 125, M Muralitharan 4 for 99).
Second Innings
A D Jadeja not out 35
N S Sidhu not out 12
Extras 10 wkt 48
Total (no wkt) 48
BOWLING: Was 5-1-20-0, S C de Sene 5-2-7-0, Muralitharan 3-0-22-0
Umpires R Keenan (South Africa) and B C Cooley (Sri Lanka).



Jayasuriya, who has scored more than 1,000 Test runs this year, on the attack during his innings of 199 in Colombo

Barnett bats in players' defence

MICHAEL HENDERSON



Line and Length

The most interesting story to emerge from the summer's cricket has not been reported. It has not been reported because nobody could tell it. Nobody could tell it because Kim Barnett was bullied into silence and silence, as we know, begets guesswork. The guessing game is over. Perhaps we will now hear the tale loud and clear.

The sequence of events that led to Dean Jones's abrupt departure from Derbyshire in June has been veiled by a fog of supposition, selective leaks and media indifference. Derbyshire, who have the lowest membership of the 18 first-class counties, are not a fashionable club.

Yet the story is still worth hearing, because what happened there impinges on the status of cricketers and the rights of members. Barnett, the Derbyshire captain for 13 seasons until last year, when Jones was lured from Melbourne to bring some "glamour" to the place, certainly thought so. He wanted people to know the circumstances that led to Jones's decision, before the constraints proved too severe.

That remained the case until last Thursday, when Derbyshire revealed that the £1,500 fine they levied on Barnett for

making allegedly improper comments in a radio interview had been revoked. Because Mike Horton, the club chairman, was abroad "for the foreseeable future", they said, Barnett and his legal adviser would be unable to question him. Horton has subsequently returned from the United States, but the revocation remains.

Jones left Derby in the first week of June under a cloud — or, as Evelyn Waugh once wrote of somebody else, under a ray of dazzling light. The Victorian criticised the attitude

of players he had led to second place in the championship last year, then — vamoosh! — he scurried.

Barnett, unsurprisingly, wished to present the players' response to this generalised attack and, for his pains, he was hauled over the coals by a committee that preferred to "see all and say now". He prepared an appeal to the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), whose discipline committee was to hear it on July 11 until everybody realised that Horton, the principal player, was in Florida!

Since then, the repercussions of this affair have served as a tacky sideshow to the cricket. Les Stillman, the coach who came with Jones from Victoria, was effectively demoted to chief gag, although he continues to draw a full salary and is allowed to live in a house supplied by the club.

Ian Buxton, a former club captain, resigned as chairman of the cricket committee and relations between members of the full committee, not all of whom appear to support Horton, are less than harmonious.

Derbyshire have yet to win a championship match and it is reasonable to conclude that this civil war hasn't helped the team.

Jones left Derby in the first week of June under a cloud — or, as Evelyn Waugh once wrote of somebody else, under a ray of dazzling light. The Victorian criticised the attitude

Pakistan A taught a hard lesson by Bailey

By DEREK HODGSON

NORTHAMPTON (Pakistan A won toss): Northamptonshire beat Pakistan A by 60 runs

ROD BAILEY'S punishing 153 not out knocked the stuffing out of Pakistan's talented, precocious youngsters. They had been able to match the counties in limited-overs matches, but not here.

Bailey, in tandem with Richard Montgomerie, savaged the Pakistanis' bowling, with the Northamptonshire captain hitting five sixes and 15 fours.

Pakistan A, having exceeded their bowling time, could bat for only 46 overs. They started well, but Salim Elahi and Hasan Raza, the Test batsmen, had been dismissed, they were never again within target range.

PALESTINE (Warwickshire

A won): Warwickshire players in view of what faces them in the semi-final today against Warwickshire, such experienced campaigners as the 60-overs game, who are seeking to reach their fourth final in five years. They recently trounced Sussex in the Britannic Assurance county championship and Axa Life League and are playing in front of their own vocal supporters, the more partisan of whom will be expecting a rout.

Yet Sussex's extraordinary run has put the Warwickshire players on alert. They are guarding against complacency and a professional performance ought to be sufficient to keep in check a Sussex side high on confidence but low on resources.

Unsurprisingly, Sussex are likely to keep faith with the side that pulled off such an improbable win at Derby. For Warwickshire, Andy Moles hopes to take part, despite breaking a finger in the championship game against Sussex. If he plays, he will bat with a specially strengthened left glove; if not, Wagh will step in.

Derbyshire are not dealing here with any old malcontent. Barnett has made more runs, and more hundreds, than any batsman in the club's history. As captain, he delivered two one-day trophies and took them in third place in the championship at a time when the club's very existence was in peril. He has served cricket rather better than it is at present serving him.

Guidelines

to players

drawn up by the ECB with regard to public utterances, advise that "any comment made must be fair and reasonable and must not involve a personalised attack on another cricketer, umpire, administrator or county".

Barnett has made it clear all along that all he wishes to do is tell the whole story. So come on, Kim, we're all ears.

£100,000 to be won playing ITF

For full details of how to play ITF, and the chance to win our £50,000 top prize, see Sport, next Tuesday.



THE TIMES

Age concern over Warne's balcony scene

EXTRA COVER

play 11 fixtures in strict accordance with International Cricket Council (ICC) rules.

They are hoping that David Richards, the ICC chief executive, will play against them in the last fixture in Middlesex. "We would be surprised if we went home with a victory," one camp follower said.

Once England have hardened up and won the Ashes, all they will have to do is learn the tricky matter of celebrating with dignity.

Italian job

As part of their build-up to the next ICC Trophy, Italy are making a two-week tour of England. They have brought with them 15 players and will

hot water when he offered his own vision of the English game. Speaking in the *Kent Messenger*, he advocated each county signing two overseas players and the amalgamation of several clubs.

Somerset and Gloucestershire were a natural pairing, their facilities not being up to scratch, he claimed. Northamptonshire should merge with Leicestershire, Hampshire with Sussex, Kent, unsurprisingly, were spared.

His ideas prompted an angry mailbag. "I would suggest Kent amalgamate with Essex," wrote one reader, who did, however, embrace the proposal for more foreigners. "That's a great idea. Why not make it four and get the home-grown sloggers out of the game?" Fleming had the last word, slogging his way to a career-best 138 last week.

Total dominance

Sanath Jayasuriya, the Sri Lanka batsman, scored his 1,000th Test run of the year

yesterday, a considerable achievement bearing in mind that his first innings was not until March 8 and it was a duck. Previously, six years in Test cricket had brought him 830 runs. "I never thought I would see him do this sort of thing in Test cricket," Dav Whatmore, his former coach, said.

Running sore

Batting with a runner can be fraught with danger, but it presented no problem to Paul Prichard, the Essex captain, at Canterbury. With Darren Robinson and Tim Hodgson providing the legs, he remained at the crease 4½ hours after pulling a hamstring, though Prichard made their task easier by frequently thumping the ball to the boundary as he raised his score from 69 to 224.

Whether anyone has batted longer with a runner is a moot point. Graeme Fowler hobbed for a similar length of time while playing for Lancashire against Warwickshire at Southport in 1982. After damaging a thigh, he took his score from 26 to 126.

Good sign

There is no doubt the longest innings played by an Englishman this summer. David Longman has spent three months faithfully dogging the England and Australia teams in an effort to secure their signatures on 99 prints of Sir Donald Bradman that are being sold for £9,300 each.

He was a guest at a lunch arranged by Cornhill Insurance at Trent Bridge and won a cricket bat in a raffle. As it bore the autographs of the two teams, he acquired in the course of a couple of hours what he had spent the whole summer trying to collect. "I think he will be keeping the bat," a friend said. "He is taking it as a slight reward for his charitable efforts."

FATHER TIMES

This time the gloves are on.

The Semi-Final of the NatWest Trophy is no time for half measures. Not when the winners get a trip to Lord's and the losers need a trip to Lourdes.

NatWest

More than just a bank

National Westminster Bank plc. Registered Office: 41 Leadenhall, London EC3P 2BP. Registered in England No 024077.

Medieval monks, multitudes of mammaries

Brother Eluric was having trouble with "unworthy thoughts". Later in the eyes, I fully expected to run into similar trouble myself, but more of *Breasts a'forn*. For the moment, it was time to concentrate on the goings-on in medieval Shrewsbury. Habits on... treasures shaved... it was time for *Cadfael* (ITV).

Where brother Eluric was still having trouble with "unworthy thoughts", Brother Cadfael, who before he became a man of the cloth was a man of the world so known about such things, tried to console him. "Brother, you use extravagant terms for feelings that are wholly human and natural." But Eluric would not be cheered. He had gazed upon Mistress Perle's smooch and was much taken with it. "Hard though I struggle, I can think of nothing else."

To be fair to the tortured Eluric, Mistress Perle's charms did not stop at a splendid smooch. She was young, blonde, rich and recently widowed, which even in the 12th century was a fairly winning combination. As a result she was being vigorously pursued by most of the single men of Shropshire, although they might have known that she — with the help of Cadfael's herbal preparation — had given her dying husband a little help along the way.

Consumed with guilt, she gifted the monastic home to the abbey in exchange for a single white rose to be cut and delivered on the first of July. As fate would have it, it was Eluric, who as one of Cadfael's ever-changing retinue of young undergardeners must have known he'd be lucky to make it to the second communal break, who got the cutting and delivery job. Sure enough, within minutes Eluric was found dead by his lady's rose bush.

Had he been around 400 years later, Abbot Radulfus might have begun: "Alas, poor Eluric, I knew him well..." But this was something, so he didn't. "From love to despair," he observed, "but a short step further to the most unhappy of temptations." It took me a couple of seconds to work out he was talking about suicide.

By the time I caught up, Cadfael had moved on again. There was no rain on Eluric's habit and no blood on his hands. You don't mean...? Cadfael most certainly did. And here was a perfect imprint of the murderer's medieval boot: "A little warm wax, a steady hand and we have him by the heel."

Derek Jacobi is one of the few actors in the world who can get away with lines like that. Others are less fortunate, particularly those whose job it is to deliver one line of cod-medieval dialogue and then fade

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

into the grubby background again. "Cousin Judith — what is your opinion of this new wool?" looked to be a particular stinker until we discovered that its deliverer was actually the murderer. Served him right, then.

What Jacobi has realised and others have not is that a) period dialogue is not always in verse and b) this is television not Stratford-upon-Avon. Less is more and in

one or two cases it is an awful lot less that is required. Mind you, it's not all the actors' fault if they've got confused. The series does have a curiously theatrical style to it, where the rather contrived medieval bustle stops while the principal actors deliver their lines and then starts again when they have finished.

Still, it's different, ambitious and Jacobi is in it — which makes three big pluses. If they could just make Hungary look a bit more like the Shropshire I know and love, it could be very good indeed.

If they could have just made breasts look a little less like... well, breasts, I might have enjoyed Meema Spadola's film, *Breasts* (Channel 4), a bit more. Unworthy thoughts, I quickly realised, were not going to be a problem after Spadola had persuaded 22 New York women to take their tops off and talk serious tits. Instead, the prevailing sense

was one of exclusion, akin to the feeling that every man has experienced when told that the apparently fascinating conversation that stopped the second he arrived was "girls' talk". This, I suspect, was girls' television and, taking a wild guess, quite good girls' television at that, hampered only slightly by the fact that it was also American.

A far less embarrassing time was to be spent in the company of David Attenborough, who for one night only appeared to have had borrowed the *J'accuse* form for *Wildlife on One* (BBC1). Piranha — pah! Bunch of softies, half of them are vegetarians, others are cowardly parasites who live by taking cowardly chunks out of other fishes' tails.

It's only the red-bellied variety you have to worry about, and then only if you're a great white eger chick without two brain cells to rub together. But that's gone down well on the set of the new James Bond film.

By Matthew Bond

BBC1

6.00am *Business Breakfast* (95313)

7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (07071)

9.00 Breakfast News Extra (T) (522488)

9.20 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (537509)

9.50 Esther: The changing role of grandparents (T) (5264145)

10.20 Put It to the Test (5231416)

10.45 Caron Cooper's Cooking with Confidence (212110)

11.00 News (T) and weather (2087961)

11.05 Due South (T) (4137892)

11.50 Good Neighbours (5224435)

12.00 News (T) (4632961)

12.05pm Wipeout (T) (5726865)

12.35 Neighbours (T) (121435)

1.00 News (T) and weather (73058)

1.30 Regional News (88016752)

1.40 Columbo: Candidate for Crime (1973)

The murder of an election campaign manager (T) (4162416)

3.10 Quiller (T) (1944684)

4.00 Poppy (202193) 4.10 The Thunderbirds (201823) 4.20 Morph TV with Tony Hart (2509681) 4.35 Prince of Atlantis (9997400) 5.00 Newsround. Saving homeless dogs living on India's streets from almost certain death (T) (2621481) 5.10 Bright Sparks. A 16-year-old car designer (3572394)

5.35 Neighbours (T) (417597)

6.00 News (T) and weather (936)

6.30 Regional News (416)

7.00 Big Brother of the Future. Jim Davidson puts asping teenage snooker stars through their shots (T) (2394)

7.30 TW Time Machine. The remarkable success of the "Stammer Jumper" (T) (400)

8.00 The National Lottery Live Carol Smillie welcomes Michael Jackson's support group Human Nature (T) (234065)

8.15 Selection Box: Bits of a Festival. Celebrities pick their favorite moments from the Essex girl comedy (T) (708868)

8.50 Points of View. Presented by Anne Robinson (T) (164324)

9.00 News (T) and weather (2329)

9.29 National Lottery Update (423680)

9.30 Men Behaving Badly: Rich and Fat. The lads poke yet more fun at each other as Gary's secret stash of £33,000 is revealed (T) (536187)

10.00 Inside Story: Dial V for Vengeance. Professionals dedicated to exacting revenge on their clients' good-for-nothing acquaintances outline a range of services, from quick pranks to more fearsome plots. (T) (612400)

10.45 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker introduces highlights of Manchester United v Southampton. Plus all the goals and talking-points from tonight's other games in the top flight (T) (2229705)

12.00 Blood, Ties (1991) Harley Weston, Michelle Johnson and Jason London star in this vampire thriller about a family of bloodsuckers whose corrupt and criminal acts gain them many enemies. Directed by Jim McBride (T) (72725)

1.30am Weather (5027171)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The numbers next to each programme entry are Video PlusCodes, numbers which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. VideoPlus+ (TM), PlusCode (TM) and Video Programmes are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

BBC2

6.00am Open University: Paris and the Renaissance (5248465) 6.25 Ticket to Fly (2340882) 6.50 Regressing to Gravity (T) (5329597)

7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (T and signing) (5048655)

7.30 Telebabies (T) (4510077) 7.55 Postman Pat (T) (5355665) 8.35 Get Your Own Back (T) (577348) 8.45 Spiderman (T) (5291955)

9.30 Smart (T) (57481) 10.00 Telebabies (T) (7211680)

10.25 Cricket: NetWest Trophy. Live coverage of the opening session in the second semi-final of the 60-overs-a-side competition: Warwickshire take on the surprise semi-finalists Sussex (T) (5761677)

11.30 News (T) and weather (2087961)

11.45 The Day That Changed My Life. Down But Not Out. An illustration of the bitter reality of homelessness through the eyes of an Edinburgh man (T) (4922)

12.45pm Prue Leith's Tricks of the Trade (T) (5162446)

12.55 Today's Gourmet (T) (104507)

1.25 Cricket: NetWest Trophy. Further coverage through to the close of play in the second semi-final of the 60-overs-a-side competition between Warwickshire and Sussex (T) (5763223)

NT: Subsequent programmes are subject to alteration or late running

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GOLF 38
Parnevick destined
to miss out
on Ryder Cup

SPORT

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

SAILING 38
Close finish
illuminates
Fastnet Race

Shameful scenes mar semi-final

Angry players shove cricket into darkness

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

CHELMSFORD (Essex won toss) Essex, with two wickets in hand, need six runs to beat Glamorgan

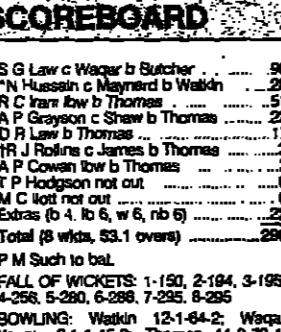
AMID bad blood and even worse light, the first of the NatWest Trophy semi-finals was adjourned in chaos and confusion at 8.10pm last night. Essex were six runs short of their target, with 6.1 overs remaining, when the umpires were given no option but to take the players off in the middle of an over from Glamorgan's Waqar Younis.

A match in which ill feeling was seldom far below the surface then brought disreputable scenes, with two England players, Mark Trott and Robert Croft, pushing each other as they argued over the merits of the situation. An inquiry into the circumstances is inevitable.

The entire game had been combustible, though much it was of compelling quality. Stuart Law often looks an angry young man, sometimes with justification. He has a grouse with the Australian selectors who decline to pick him and, yesterday, he had a spar with Darren Thomas for being careless enough to bowl him a beamer. Law summarily



Stuart Law: dashing



Darren Thomas: dashing

CHELMSFORD SCOREBOARD

Glamorgan		Essex	
S J James c Robinson b Grayson	108	108	108
H Morris c Lott b Watkin	6	6	6
A Dale c Cowan b Grayson	45	45	45
M P Maynard run out	26	26	26
P A Cotter c Grayson b Watkin	56	56	56
D P Croft c Grayson b Watkin	17	17	17
G P Butcher not out	18	18	18
A D Shaw run out	11	11	11
S D Thomas c S G Law b Cowan	11	11	11
Extras (b 9, w 1, nb 6)	22	22	22
Total (8 wkt, 60 overs)	307	307	307
Waqar Younis and T C Watkin did not bat			
PAU: C Lott 1-13, S G Law 1-165, 4-251, 5-278, 6-291, 7-294, 8-301			
BOWLING: Lott 12-2-50-1; Cowan 12-0-62-2; Iran 9-0-36-0; S G Law 4-0-37-0; Croft 12-4-47-0; Butcher 7-0-39-1; Dale 3-0-21-0			
Umpires: J C Baldwinson and D J Constant			

GLAMORGAN

STUART LAW

DARREN THOMAS

ALAN LEE

CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13 1997

44

ly won the argument with Thomas to sweep Essex towards their second successive NatWest Trophy final and, surely, he will win his point with the Australians.

Law struck 90 from only 73

balls at his adoring, perspiring second home of Chelmsford and, after that, it seemed, even the notably nervy chasers of Essex would make light of a target of 302. Not so. Despite a heroic half-century from Ronnie Irani, playing with torn rib cartilage, they had declined to 296 for eight when

The Queenslander was incensed, and not a little pained. In swift succession he hurled down his bat and both gloves while offering Thomas the benefit of his opinions. Thomas waved a perfunctory apology but, having claimed in a newspaper preview that he looked forward to mixing it with Law, he did not look the picture of remorse.

Law took an age to compose himself but then treated Thomas to both barrels — venomous strokes accompanied by apparently vengeful words. When he holed out to long-off in the 24th over, he strode off pointing accusingly at another Glamorgan player who had evidently had something to say.

Nasser Hussain, granted a timely chance to display his leadership ability by a hamstring injury to Paul Prichard, opted to bowl first and must have been congratulating himself when Hugh Morris squirmed the tenth ball of the innings to Law at gully. Once the rain had cleared, though, so did the approach of the Welsh and the second wicket added 102 in 29 overs.

Jones, who heads the first-class managers to make hundred without playing a memorable shot, simply working the ball into the gaps. His century here contained only five fours. Only time and opportunity will tell if his technique can thrive at higher level but he can hardly make a stronger claim.

Essex's outburst was below par, both Dale and Cotter being expensively dropped, and when Irani was forced off midway through his tenth over, the Welsh contingent burst into *Land of my Fathers*. They were still more euphoric when the last ten overs produced 82 runs, but it proved premature.

After 20 overs of the reply, Law and Darren Robinson, a positive but sensible partner, had rushed to 122. Other than a run-out chance, squandered by Shaw, Glamorgan did not sniff success until Law persisted, aiming for a second straight six off Butcher.

When the estimable Watkin rallied from early punishment with Redknapp yesterday and quickly agreed a contract, it seems, however, that Barnes suffered a moment of uncertainty and made what has amounted to an embarrassing

Redknapp was proclaiming that Barnes was his man early in the evening and he added, almost with uncertainty, that he would be very upset should the player change his mind.

Barnes will travel to Newcastle today for a medical and will join the North-East club on a two-year contract worth more than £1.5 million.

The free transfer ends a ten-year association with Liverpool.

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